Reviewer's report

Title: Factor structure, discriminant validity and standard percentages of the Questionnaire for the Assessment of Disgust Sensitivity (QADS) in a representative German survey

Version: 2 Date: 21 February 2010

Reviewer: Craig Sawchuk

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the revised version of this manuscript. The authors carefully attended to the many concerns raised by the reviewers. I particularly appreciated the more thorough review of other existing measures of disgust, the relevant literature on the factor structure of disgust domains, and their revisions to the statistical analyses. The manuscript is clearly improved from its prior version, although additional revisions are suggested to help improve its suitability to the BMC readership and the broader scientific community.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) The language of the manuscript has been markedly improved from the first version, although further tightening of the language is still needed. The clarity of the language in the Results section should be a model for the flow of the language in the introduction and conclusion. The Results section was quite clear and easy to follow. The Introduction continued to be disjointed in several places, but again, improved from its earlier form. For example, in the Introduction, word choice and grammatical structure were questionable and made it difficult to fully understand the authors' points (e.g., p.6: "The diverse results in the clinical field might be due to that the instruments with inhomogeneous item scaling have been developed from small specific samples or the scales' showing insufficient reliability."). Both the Introduction and the Discussion could use another review/rewrite in order for this paper to be published in a primarily English-speaking journal.

2) Perhaps one solution to help tighten the manuscript would be to reduce the length of the Introduction and Discussion. In the Introduction, the authors could try reducing it to about 2 pages from its current 3.5 pages, staying focused on reviewing the factor structure of other disgust scales, justifying the rationale for a large scale replication of the QADS, and listing of hypotheses. The final 2 paragraphs in the Introduction can be dramatically reduced to just listing the hypotheses as several additional ideas were brought up in these paragraphs that did not seem particularly relevant and clearly made identifying the true scope and purpose of the paper ambiguous. This study is primarily a methods paper, and thus keeping their Introduction focused on this point would be helpful. Also, I would strongly suggest removing the term "area-unspecific" as this is ambiguous. Do they mean generalized disgust elicitors/domains?
For the Discussion, again, it could likely be reduced down to 2-2.5 pages. There were also some redundant sentences (e.g., last paragraph of p.13) that could be removed. The middle paragraph on p.14 was very well-written and should be a good model of how to craft the rest of this section for clarity.

Minor Essential

1) In the Abstract, please use a term different than area-unspecific (see comment above). Please review the punctuation and remove or clarify abbreviations (e.g., AMD). Probably do not need to list alpha coefficient numbers in the Abstract.

2) Consider removing data associated with the FEW. It really does not seem to add anything to the manuscript, and the low, but significant correlations appear completely accounted for by the large sample size. This could also help reduce the length of the manuscript. In doing so, Table 5 could be removed. I can see how it can serve as a discriminant instrument, but it would seem that measures of negative affectivity, depression, and/or anxiety would be much stronger examples of discriminant validity.

3) Consider removing Table 6 as presenting this level of detail does not appear necessary.

4) In the Methods section, the last 2 sentences in the first paragraph on p.8 could be deleted. Under Instruments (p.8), just present the alpha coefficients after each subscale rather than repeating "Alpha" (e.g., Death (.85), Body secretion (.74), etc.)

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.