Author's response to reviews

Title: Validation of the Comprehensive Feeding Practices Questionnaire with parents of 10-to-12-year-olds

Authors:

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Response letter

Stavanger, July 13, 2011

The authors would like to thank the reviewers for their time and their appreciation of our research. Their comments are appropriate and will be addressed below. Changes in the manuscript are highlighted in red.

Reviewer: Behice Erci

Reviewer's report:
Finding is confused in Results section. Subscales should be defined, its reliability and validity should be clearly written.

Response: The Results section of the manuscript has been changed to include a brief summing-up of the instrument's reliability and validity in our sample (p. 14 in the revised manuscript). The subscales are defined in the appendix (p. 28).

Reviewer: Isabelle Roskam

Reviewer's report:
Discretionary revisions
Thanks for giving me the opportunity to review this manuscript. It is well structured. The title and the abstract convey what has been found. The question is well defined with an appropriate method. The sample is large.
I especially appreciated the discussion which states the limitations very carefully. In particular, it is said that the current validation has to be extended and I agree with such a conclusion. The writing is OK.
I have several recommendations for the authors in order to improve the manuscript.

- In the introduction, the authors should extend the section about the importance of such an instrument in applied research.
Response: The Introductions (Background) section has been changed to include a brief discussion about the importance of the CFPQ and similar instruments in applied research (p. 6 in the revised manuscript).

- The structure of the CFPQ has too many (10) "little" factors with a few number of items in each. Table 3 showed that the factors were not totally independent from each others. Hypotheses could be made about second-order factors. These could reveal a more clear and more simple structure of the instruments.

Response: We consider the present study part of an early phase validation of the CFPQ, thus we chose to focus solely on the original first order factors (despite few items on each) to facilitate comparison with other studies applying this not yet established instrument. Furthermore, correlations between the factors (table 3) were not large enough to compromise the discriminant validity of the factors. However, we see that some of the correlations indicate shared variance between factors (as could be expected), and we agree that future analyses should consider second order factors to simplify the structure of the instrument.

- The factorial structure has to be supported with a confirmatory factor analysis but in another sample.

Response: The authors agree on this comment, and we see confirmatory factor analysis as a natural next step in further assessment of the validity of the CFPQ with parents of children this age range.

Reviewer: Dara Musher-Eizenman

Reviewer's report:

Review of Validation of the Comprehensive Feeding Practices Questionnaire with parents of 10-to-12-year-olds
For: BMC Medical Research Methodology
The current study assessed the validity of the CFPQ within a novel cultural context and with older children than previously examined. The large sample and
thorough analytic approach are strengths of this study. As validations of feeding practice measures are scarce, this study makes a strong contribution to the literature. More detailed comments are below.

Introduction (both minor essential):
1. In general, the introduction is well-written and very clearly lays out the need for this study. There are a few awkward phases and sentences that should be revised. Notably:
   o P. 3 “The emphasis on parental control in previous feeding measures has been accompanied by less research on other important practices” The meaning is clear, but the phrasing is awkward.
   o P. 5 “In lack of validated instruments measuring a wider spectrum of feeding practices that might me more relevant for parents of older children and adolescents” Here the meaning is not completely clear.

   Response: The sentences have been revised to improve the phrasing (p. 3 and p. 6 in the revised manuscript).
2. The argument for validating the measure in an older sample is excellent, but the rationale for 10-12 year olds per se is less clear.

   Response: The manuscript has been changed to include a discussion on the rationale for focusing on 10-to-12-year-olds (p. 5-6 in the revised manuscript).

Method (all discretionary):
3. I am afraid I do not fully understand the implications of the fact that the study was conducted without ethical approval because the “individual health information included in the study (was) marginal.” This may be a cultural difference in how human subjects approval is sought and granted.

   Response: The manuscript has been changed to clarify the research approval procedure (p. 7 in the revised manuscript).
4. Were there any systematic differences (e.g., in rural vs. urban, SES) between the high responding and low responding classrooms?

   Response: Reassessment of response rates showed that high responding and low responding classes were quite evenly distributed between schools. Also, the range of response rates between classes reported in the manuscript included quite extreme values (“outliers”). Thus, it might be more informative to report the range of response rates
among schools, which varied from 44 to 93% (the manuscript has been changed accordingly). However, there is no reason to believe that there are systematic differences between participating classrooms or schools when it comes to socio-demographics, as the Norwegian school system is based on the socio-democratic principle of equality. Furthermore, the participating schools are all located within the same geographic area, which according to Statistics Norway (Statistisk Sentralbyrå) is one of the most wealthy and urbanized areas in Norway. Thus, it makes less sense to talk about high-SES and low-SES classes or schools here. That being said, there might be socio-demographic differences on the individual level that affect feeding practices. However, the aim of the present study was testing of the measurement model as such in a new cultural setting and with a different age group. Hence, testing of potential socio-demographic differences was outside the scope of this work.

5. While the removal of certain items makes sense for the target age group, it is unfortunate that this resulted in some subscales having only 1 or 2 items without new items being generated to allow for examination of these constructs.

Response: We agree on this, but due to lack of resources, and because this study was intended to be part of an early phase validation of the CFPQ, item generation was not prioritized. However, we see generation of new items as an important further step in our research on parental feeding practices and eating behavior in older children.

Results:

6. Please clarify what is meant by “The Kaiser criterion suggested that 10 factors should be retained, while parallel analysis suggested 8 factors.” (p. 11) – minor essential

Response: The manuscript has been changed to clarify this (p. 11 and p. 13 in the revised manuscript).

7. It is interesting that several analyses supported an overlap between the “balance and variety” and “teaching” subscales. These both appear to be authoritative feeding practices and it is conceptually satisfying to think of them together. – discretionary

Response: We agree, and as mentioned in the Conclusions section, further work should elaborate on these dimensions representing nutrition communication between parents and children.
Discussion (all discretionary):

8. The discussion is well written and provides very interesting “food for thought” for researchers in this area.

Response: Thank you!

9. The only area in which the discussion might be expanded is the issue of the applicability of the scale to the older sample considered in this study, as this was a stated aim of the project.

Response: The Introduction (Background) part include comments on the potential applicability of a broad measure such as the CFPQ for older children and adolescents (p. 5-6).

10. The authors comment briefly on how cultural differences might have impacted the results. This is also a topic I could envision more discussion of (although I recognize this might be outside the scope of the paper). The lack of convergence for the item about leaving the table when full even if the family is still eating may be one such cultural difference.

Response: Supplementary discussion of cultural differences would of course be interesting but was, as you suggest, outside the scope of the paper.

Yours sincerely,

Elisabeth Lind Melbye, on behalf of the authors