Reviewer's report

Title: Validity of Simpson-Angus Scale (SAS) in a naturalistic schizophrenia population

Version: 1 Date: 8 January 2005

Reviewer: Jong-Hoon Kim

Reviewer's report:

General

The authors examined the validity of Simpson-Angus Scale (SAS) against DSM-IV criteria for NIP using ROC analysis. Actometry was also utilized in the assessments. The goals of the study are clear and the methods sound.
This kind of study is necessary because the standardized metric properties of rating scale should be established in clinical psychiatric research.
In particular, a study on the validity of SAS is necessary, because it has some shortcomings and its metric properties have not been sufficiently investigated.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

In general, the purpose of ROC analysis is two, i.e., screening purpose and diagnostic purpose. The cut-off scores differ as to which purpose the analysis is carried out for (Leentjens AFG et al., 2002). These issues need to be addressed and appropriate revisions can be performed.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

In this kind of study, the ideal gold standard diagnosis in ROC analysis should be expert-consensus diagnosis. However, only one investigator evaluated all movement disorders in this study (SAS, BARS, AIMS and DSM-IV as well). Therefore, cross-scale contamination issue might occur. These limitations should be described in the discussion section.
Spelling error (Abstract and Conclusions section) is found and should be corrected.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The NIP is composed of three dimensions, i.e., bradykinesia, tremor and rigidity. Table 2 could be revised using these three dimensional scores (score of gait item, score of tremor item, mean score of rigidity items) (as an alternative to these, factor scores can be used after factor analysis). The results of actometric assessment could be less emphasized or might be deleted, because actometry has not been reported to be useful in assessing hypokinetic parkinsonism, the core feature of NIP. Moreover, these might blur the main purpose of the study.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.