Author's response to reviews

Title: Comparative psychometric analyses of the SCL-90-R and its short versions in patients with affective disorders

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Version: 3 Date: 25 January 2013

Author's response to reviews: see over
Re-submission of a manuscript “Comparative psychometric analyses of the SCL-90-R and its short versions in patients with affective disorders” (MS: 4523841977250998)

Dear Prof Olino,

Many thanks for your worthwhile remarks and the comments by the reviewers. Please find our comments on the changes we made.

Reviewer 1
Reviewer's report
Title: Comparative psychometric analyses of the SCL-90-R and its short versions in patients with affective disorders
Version: 2 Date: 4 October 2012
Reviewer: Jochen Hardt
Reviewer's report:
Review to Prinz et al, Comparative psychometric analysis of the SCL-90-R...
The authors compare the psychometric properties of the SCL-90-R and various short forms in a sample of 2,727 inpatients with affective disorders. The paper is well planned, well written and provides adequate statistics. The conclusion is that utilizing the long version of the SCL-90-R is no longer recommended given that there are various short forms that are more economical and display better psychometric properties. Such a conclusion is well justified by the data presented.

There is not much what I should criticize here as a reviewer. However, since I carefully read the paper I may list two discretionary points for a revisions, leaving it open to the authors to consider them or not.

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<th>Reviewers’ Comments</th>
<th>Authors’ reply</th>
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<td>1) The authors mention in the introduction that they performed a similar analyses on a sample of 8581 inpatients with various mental disorders. I assume that affective disorders were among them. This raised the question on what is new in the present paper. Moreover, the data were</td>
<td>In the previous analysis we do not differ between any subgroups of mental disorders. In this paper we focused on the most prevalent subgroup in clinical settings and conducted the analyses for patients with affective disorders. In a sample of mixed diagnosis you cannot be sure that the reliability and validity is for each subgroup the same. Therefore we conducted analysis especially on the concurrent validity for patients with affective disorders. We clearly outlined this in the aim of the study</td>
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collected between 2000 and 2003, raising additionally a suspect that the present paper
is based on a sub sample of the previous one. Maybe the authors want to
clearly line out why these analyses has been performed additionally and how far
results go over the previously reported ones to avoid any unnecessary discussion
about it being a me-too paper.

2) The case numbers in the footnote of table 2 probably stem from the previous
analyses, this should be corrected. Tables 3 and 6 are without any case numbers
at all, tables 4 and 5 probably display the correct ones. I could not find how the
authors dealt with missing data, maybe this can be added to the methods part?

We corrected the case numbers and inserted case numbers for table 4, 5 and 6.
We computed missing data for the confirmatory analysis with the expectation-maximisation algorithm. For the other analysis we excluded cases with missing data. We stated that on page 7 of the manuscript.

Referee 2
Reviewer: Mitsunao Tomioka
Reviewer's report:
I regard the effort to simplify a psychological scale more as an important work. I reviewed your article from the point of view, but many parts of your sentences are difficult to understand logically.

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<td>1. Methods part was well described. But other part should be checked by other persons. This article must be read by all authors, and be understood by them, and it is necessary to be checked by a native English speaker.</td>
<td>The manuscript has been checked by native speakers from a professional proof reading service.</td>
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<td>2. I cannot judge the factorial validities unless the figures of path diagram on each short version and SCL-90-R. Please show the figures of models of confirmative factor analysis as supplemental data.</td>
<td>We provided this as supplemental material.</td>
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Sincerely,

S. Andreas

Sylke Andreas
Assoc. Prof., Psychologist