Author's response to reviews

Title: Bicultural identity among economical migrants from three south European countries living in Switzerland: Adaptation and validation of a new psychometric instrument

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

We revised our manuscript according to the following reviewers’ comments and queries. We also improved the manuscript wherever possible.

**Reviewer 1, Javier I Escobar:**

This is a well written paper reporting on the development and validation of a French language acculturation scale for use with immigrant populations in Switzerland. I have the following comments:

1- It is important to get some information on the immigrant groups under scrutiny (Portuguese, Spanish, Italians). What are the main issues with them? Are there issues of discrimination, psychopathology, problems with accessing services for any of these groups in Switzerland? 
   *cf. question 2*

2- Since they are using models of acculturation developed in the USA particularly for Mexican immigrants, authors should address issues such as differences in the immigration experience in the USA and Europe. For example, in the USA, issues such as illegal immigration and profound cultural differences complicate the acculturation process. The authors should add a few paragraphs addressing these issues.
   *We added a 250 words paragraph addressing questions 1 and 2, entitled “Local background” in the “Methods” Section.*

3- What is the main goal for developing this instrument? -- Help with services and treatment? – Do epidemiological studies? –
   *We added this information in the abstract: “Mental health professionals lack simple and easy to use instruments to guide them with bicultural identity evaluation in their practice. Our aim was to develop such an instrument to be used for clinical purposes...”. Similar information has also been included in the introduction: “The main goal for developing this instrument is to help with services and treatment, but the scale could also be used for epidemiological studies”.*

4- The authors should be warned, that in general, in the USA, acculturation scales predict little over and above what is predicted by primary language and country of birth. Thus, extensive inventories like this one may add little despite the added time and costs.

*We are aware of this limited usefulness in studies conducted in the USA. Since our main goal is to encourage clinicians to investigate and talk about cultural identity, we believe this issue is not essential in our context. Moreover, the linguistic situation is different in Switzerland. In the new paragraph about “Local background” we now explain that: “Italian, Spanish and Portuguese being Latin languages, linguistic adaptation is usually not an insuperable difficulty in a French speaking environment like Geneva.”*
Reviewer 2, Dharma Cortes

This is an excellent exploratory paper focusing on the issue of biculturalism in a immigrant population. It demonstrates the feasibility of using one questionnaire with immigrants from different countries of origin. The literature review is comprehensive, the results are clearly presented and the discussion raises important issues in the light of the study's findings.

1. Please refer to participants without a clinical diagnosis as "participants without a clinical diagnosis" or "undiagnosed individuals" instead of "healthy subjects." The necessary changes were made.

2. Further describe how research participants were recruited. Further description is now provided: “The first sub-sample included 42 patients recruited at an outpatient treatment facility for alcohol-related disorders. One of the authors (NJP), a trained psychiatrist, proposed the study to all eligible patients in her practice over a one month period. The second sub-sample included 55 active hospital professionals recruited among health care and administrative staff through an advertisement in the news bulletin, mailed to all hospital employees. Volunteers were invited to call the clinician in charge of the study (NJP). She made appointments with the participants in the most convenient place for them, usually their working place at the hospital. Both patients and professionals answered the questionnaire with her assistance …No financial compensation was given.”

3. Do not begin the discussion section presenting study's limitations. Rather, begin this section the following sentence: "The present study indicated that our questionnaire was well accepted…" Present limitations at the end of the discussion section. The necessary changes were made.