Author's response to reviews

Title: Factor Analysis of the Zung Self-Rating Depression Scale in Patients with Major Depressive Disorder in Primary Care.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Re: MS: 1521954268146121. “Factor Analysis of the Zung Self-Rating Depression Scale in Patients with Major Depressive Disorder in Primary Care”.

Dear Dr Lolu da-Silva:

Thank you for considering our manuscript for publication in BMC Psychiatry. We have revised the manuscript based on the comments from reviewer T Kitamura. A point-by-point response to the comments is given below. The new text in the revised manuscript is shown in bold type for clarity. We hope that the revised manuscript and our responses are satisfactory to you.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Kind regards,

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Point-by-Point Responses to Reviewers’ Comments

Reviewer: 1

Comment #1: Previously I recommended the use of a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The authors, however, avoided it and rather used an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using a portion of the participants and then used the other portion of them to conform the repeatability of the factor structure. However, I do not think this procedure is equivalent to the goodness of fit of the factor structure to the actual data. This can only be assured by the use of a CFA. I strongly recommend the authors just to write GFI, AGFI, CFI, and RMSEA of their three-factor structure. This will suffice.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this comment. We have performed a CFA with 25% of the sample. The method used and results obtained have been included in the revised manuscript pages # 5, 6 and 8.

Since the data are ordinal we could not assume the multivariate normal distribution model therefore the least-squares mean method was chosen instead. In this case the program used SAS v9.1 does not calculate the goodness-of-fit indexes based on the chi-square distribution (RMSEA and CFI).

We have calculated and added the indexes: GFI, AGFI and RMR of the 4-factor and the 3-factor structures in the results page #.

Comment #2: Does the following sentence make any sense? On note a 3-factor solution was tested using the same statistical approach and rejected since the 3-factor structure emerged explained less of the total variance (3.3%), presented items loading in more one the factor and items with low factor weights (< 0.25).

Response: We have clarified it in the revised manuscript page # 8.

Comment #3: The authors may wish to comment on the differences of the factor structures of this scale between patient and non-patient populations.

Response: We appreciate this comment however our approach in the discussion section was to limit it to patient populations. We will take this comment in account for future reference.

Comment #4: Reference 17 Chena should read Chen. Reference 19 Kanga should read Kanda.

Response: We apologize for the typos and have corrected both errors in the revised manuscript.