Reviewer’s report

Title: Three versions of Perceived Stress Scale: validation in a sample of Chinese cardiac patients who smoke

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Reviewer: Chih-Ling Huang

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Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

This manuscript represents potential importance in perceived stress and smoking in cardiac patients, although the perceived stress scale (PSS) has been used in variety of fields such as mental health, smoking, and diabetics, as well as maternal health in Taiwan. The Chinese version of the PSS was used in several studies (Chu & Kao, 2005; Chen, 1994). But three forms of the Chinese version are not compared to evaluate the appropriateness among Chinese cardiac patients who smoke.

Some comments were as follows:

1. Background. Reference 5 is not suitable to this study because the target population is adult. Why the authors mentioned the PSS and depression in adolescent?

2. Method. The FTND is in English or in Chinese? Why the authors cited the English version? The psychometrics of the Chinese version of the FTND is good enough in your study? Anxiety and depression was measured by only one item. One of the main purposes of this manuscript is to evaluate the criterion validity of the PSS. Please describe more rationales whether it is appropriate by using one item to represent anxiety and depression.

3. Results. Table 1 and Table 4 shows in the wrong format. All factor loadings need to be reported to examine the loading of crossing over other factor in Table 2. The reliability coefficients and correlations of the full scales with criterion variables need to be reported. The correlations are low, although they are statistically significant.

4. Discussion. The results have to be compared with the other Chinese version in previous studies so that the authors can explain the low factor loadings caused by translation process. High internal consistency was reported in Taiwan. The version of this study was translated to be similar with the Taiwan version? The correlations between the PSS and smoking-related variables are low for clinical meaning. The generalization of the relationship of PSS and social smoking is not suitable. The authors can compare these results to previous smoking studies.

5. Limitations. Because the PSS can be used in the intervention study,
stability (test-retest correlation) is very important for the instrument testing.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.