Author’s response to reviews

Title: Does health literacy measurement reach a consensus? - A systematic review of health literacy assessment tools.

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Title: Does health literacy measurement reach a consensus? - A systematic review of health literacy assessment tools.

Statement of relevance:

Health Literacy is a core element of patient centered care and both are closely connected to effective health communication. Though health literacy research is witnessing an enormous growth of literature, information on the status quo of health literacy measurement and the reporting quality of articles dealing with the development of health literacy measurement tools is limited. The last review on the patterns of health literacy indices covered the period up to 2008 (Jordan et al. 2011) without examining if scholars developing tools considered the methodical recommendations of the academic circle requiring to consider a set of features an instrument has to cover when developing one. Consequently, scholars working in the field of health literacy are often confronted with a bright bouquet of studies reporting on the development of instruments measuring health literacy without being able to determine their relevance, reliability and applicability, feeling being “lost in transition”. Therefore, our review has a twofold function. It will allow an overview of the current state of play in health literacy measurement shedding light on the scope and type of recently developed tools as well as the reporting quality of articles dealing with the development of tools measuring health literacy. Further, it aims to answer one of the central questions in health literacy research by appraising if health literacy measurement is reaching a consensus. Responding to this question will help to move on to develop construct based, culture sensitive and internationally comparable instruments that help to move forward with the transition in a health literacy friendly health care systems.

Number of figures: 1 figure

Number of tables in text: 3 tables
Number of tables in appendix: 2 table

Number of words: 4540 words

The manuscript has not been previously submitted to the journal.

We confirm that the manuscript has been submitted solely to the journal and that it is not published, in press, or submitted elsewhere.

We confirm that all the research meets the ethical guidelines, including adherence to the legal requirements of the study country.

We confirm that we have prepared the complete text.

We confirm to do not have a conflict of interest.

We confirm to have seen, read, and understood journal specific guidelines on copyright.
We confirm that all co-authors are included in the manuscript and had an active part to finalize the final manuscript.

**Revision**

**Comments of reviewer 1:**

**Comment 1:** Congratulations to the authors for this excellent contribution to the field. This systematic review is well executed, clearly written and reported with a critical approach. I couldn't fault it. Well done.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you a lot for the evaluation of our manuscript and the positive feedback on it’s quality.

**Comments of reviewer 2:**

**Comment 1:** Discretionary Revision
1st paragraph - line 4
The multidimensional measure of adolescent health literacy ... (MAHL).
I suggest changing the format in the title of the instrument: Multidimensional Measure of Adolescent Health Literacy

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you a lot for the evaluation of our manuscript and the positive feedback on it’s quality. We revised the spelling of MAHL as recommended in our manuscript.

**Additional comments of Referee 2:**

**Comment 1:** This manuscript addresses an important and timely topic, is original and provides important contributions to the professionals who work in healthcare. The authors justify objectively the need for meta-analysis from the English language publications related to health literacy and identify gaps as well as theoretical controversies and methodological issues for discussion. Among the theoretical questions the very concept of health literacy is revisited, as well as the contradictions that resulted from its implementation in tests and questionnaires used in the context of health care. Epidemiological data reinforces the position of the authors regarding the need for studies in the area. The methods of search and analysis of content of publications are described accurately and clearly. They generated robust data to justify the discussions and conclusions. This discussion is comprehensive and organized in topics that present different facets of the topic. The authors mention and justify the limitations of the review, and suggest future studies that meet these gaps. The title and summary are appropriate and representative of the meta-analysis.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you a lot for the in depth analysis and evaluation of our review article. We also think that it will enrich the discussions around health literacy measurement and research.

**Editorial comments:**
Comment 1: PRISMA guidelines
In accordance with BioMed Central editorial policies (http://www.biomedcentral.com/about/editorialpolicies#StandardsofReporting), could you please ensure your manuscript reporting adheres to PRISMA guidelines (http://www.prisma-statement.org/) for reporting systematic reviews. This is so your methodology can be fully evaluated and utilised. Can you please include a completed PRISMA checklist as an additional file when submitting your revised manuscript. We would also ask that you include a completed copy of the PRISMA flowchart for your study as a figure in your manuscript. **Please add a statement to that effect in the revised manuscript.

Respond to comment 1: Thank you for this inquiry. We responded to it by including the PRISMA flow chart (figure 1). Further, we prepared the PRISMA checklist and included it as an additional file.