Reviewer's report

Title: Reliability and validity study of Persian modified version of MUSIC (musculoskeletal intervention center) - Norrtalje questionnaire

Version: Date: 1 26 January 2007
Reviewer: Jens Ivar Brox

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The concept musculoskeletal disorders is not defined. I would recommend the authors to describe that this concept refers to common subjective complaints.

The manuscript is well structured. The translation process and the assessment of face and content validity are conducted according to current guidelines. The questionnaire has not been compared with a gold standard or another questionnaire, which is beyond the aim of the study.

The questionnaire include 297 items and is very comprehensive for use in occupational medicine or clinical practice in general. Does a short-form exist?

The interval for test-retest is too long. Why was not 1-2 weeks used. Did you attempt to measure if the condition had changed in any of the respondents in order to eventually exclude these respondents?

ICC is not the best method for evaluation of reliability. If scores vary considerably between individuals, the variation within an individual contributes very little to ICC. Therefore, ICC>0.9 does not exclude poor reliability.

The authors are recommended to give an agreement plot or to compute repeatability or critical difference.

Also, the significance is less important than the size of kappa coefficients.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

There is no "gold standard" (page 7), but other questionnaires exist and should be discussed.

Table 2 - describe demographic data, working conditions, musculoskeletal health, lifestyle smoking and life events in a foot note in order to shorten the table.

Table 3 - repeatability or critical difference should be given, ICC is not acceptable. The reader warrants more information about measurement accuracy in order to assess results in a follow-up.

Report references consistently.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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.