Dear Associate Editor,

We submit the revised version of the manuscript "Development and preliminary validation of a questionnaire to measure satisfaction with home care in Greece: an exploratory factor analysis of polychoric correlations". Note that the title of the paper is slightly different now, as suggested by one of the reviewers. We also submit the original questionnaire (in Greek) used in this study, as requested. A point-by-point description of the changes made in light of the referees' comments is provided.

Yours faithfully,

Vassilis Aletras

Authors' response to reviews:

Revised Title: Development and preliminary validation of a questionnaire to measure satisfaction with home care in Greece: an exploratory factor analysis of polychoric correlations.

Authors:
VASSILIS H ALETRAS (valetras@uom.gr)
ARSENIS KOSTARELIS (arsenkost@yahoo.gr)
MARIA TSITOURIDOU (mtsitourid@yahoo.gr)
DIMITRIS NIAKAS (niakas@eap.gr)
ANNA NICOLAOU (nicolaou@uom.gr)

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Authors’ response to reviews:
Reviewer: Edwin Wouters

We thank the reviewer for his comments.

Major compulsory revisions:

1. The language in the text has been corrected so that the manuscript is suitable for publication (the specific changes suggested by the referee have been made on p. 4, p. 6 and p. 11).

2. The argument put forward is that it might not be legitimate to exclude items on the basis of their correlations with overall measures. Initially, we acknowledge that our phrasing might have been confusing. We did not examine both the correlations between items as well as the correlations of items with the two overall satisfaction questions. We only examined the latter correlations (that is, correlations between items measuring satisfaction with individual attributes and items measuring overall satisfaction).

Prior research has indeed shown that patient satisfaction might in fact be high regarding general services and low with respect to waiting times. Nevertheless, this finding was not based on a measure of overall satisfaction. Even satisfaction with general services might not be an overall measure if it refers to a created summated scale comprising of various dimensions of quality and satisfaction. Both scales and individual items (such as waiting times) might indeed be different dimensions of quality and satisfaction. In any case, an important point is made that one should not exclude items only on the basis of observed correlations. This has been taken into account in the revised manuscript.

We now offer theoretical arguments for examining the relation of item evaluations with overall evaluations and conclude that the lack of significance in the correlations can only serve as a trigger for further investigation. We therefore provide the description of the two items of interest and provide additional arguments for their exclusion (p. 8-9 and p. 15 in the revised manuscript).

3. We have restructured the Methods Section (p.7-14).

4. As suggested, we have moved the paragraph “An additional…” from the Discussion Section to the Methods (p.12) and Results (p.17) Sections. We also computed and explicitly reported the inter-item correlations and clarified the paragraph to indicate that we refer to inter-item correlations within each scale.

5. The study limitations are now stated in the last paragraph of the Discussion Section (p. 23).

Reviewer: Laura Koopman

We thank the reviewer for her comments.

Minor essential revisions:
- We numbered the pages as requested.
- The whole manuscript has been checked for language problems and the remarks of the referee have been taken into account. Regarding the specific points made:

  o “Individuals over the age of 65... in 2005” has become “In 2005 there were 79 million individuals over the age of 65 in Western and Central Europe” (p. 4 in the revised manuscript).
  
  o The sentence “In addition, other services, such as meal preparation, might be available to all upon request abroad, yet only in certain programs and individuals in Greece, if the decision makers find it necessary” has been shortened in order to become more understandable (p. 6).
  
  o We have removed the word “subsequently” from the sentence “that were not included subsequently in the main study” (p.7).
  
  o In the sentence “Since however that factor...” we used “since” and deleted the word “however” (p. 16).
  
  o The change suggested for the sentence “Higher levels of satisfaction were associated...” has been made (p. 22).

- The initial pool from which the sample of this study has been drawn is now explained on p. 9-10.

- The fact that the demographics relate to our final sample is now stressed on p. 15-16 (“The majority of enrollees in the final sample was women...”) and Table 2.

- Data with which we could examine sample representativeness was in fact not available. We therefore now mention this in the limitations of the study (p. 22).

- The value of 0.40 suggested by the literature is now stated (p. 18).

- The study limitations are now stated in the last paragraph of the Discussion Section (p. 22-23).

- Regarding polyserial correlations (Table 5) indeed they cannot be used for individual items since there are only 5 possible categories. In summated scales with 4 or 5 included items, however, the possible categories created by summing the respective 5-level items might turn out to be more than 15. Indeed the relevant statistical software (that is, LISREL) only computed polyserial correlations in such cases.

- We have changed the word “instrument” into “questionnaire” in the title and conclusions (p. 1, p. 23).

Discretionary revisions:

- We acknowledge the limitations of the literature on satisfaction measurement and provide relevant references (p. 23).

Reviewer: Marloes Zuidgeest

We thank the reviewer for her comments.

Major compulsory revisions:
ABSTRACT
- We have erased the word “pretesting” from the Abstract since it did not allow one to comprehend that cognitive interviewing is an available technique for pretesting questionnaires. This is mentioned in the Methods section (p. 8).
- The number of items capturing satisfaction with individual attributes is indeed 31 and 2 additional questions are meant to capture the overall level of enrollee satisfaction. This is now correctly explained on p.2, p.15 and p. 20.

INTRODUCTION
- The research objectives were already in the Background Section in the original manuscript. We restructured the text by first discussing home care in Greece and then presenting the research objectives (p. 6-7).
- On p. 4 we mention the scarcity of papers that employed validated questionnaires to measure patient satisfaction.

METHODS
- The answering categories of the 5-point Liker scale are mentioned on p. 7.
- We have restructured the Methods and Results Sections in such a way that they correspond (p.7-20).

RESULTS
- The response rate has been corrected to 63% (p. 15).
- The items excluded are described on p. 15.
- Sentences that relate to the Methods section have been deleted from the Results Section (p. 14-20).
- We mention the use of mean and median scores in the Methods Section (p. 14).

DISCUSSION
- The item indeed has 31 items measuring individual aspects of care and as mentioned above we have made all the necessary changes.
- The study limitations are discussed on p. 23.

Minor essential revisions:
- As mentioned above, the necessary changes have been made.
- On p. 15 of the revised manuscript we changed “administered questionnaires” (it was on p. 14 in the previous version of the paper) into “face-to-face interviews”. Also, we changed “observations” into “interviews” (p. 15).

Discretionary revisions:
- Data with which we could examine sample representativeness was in fact not available. We therefore now mention this in the limitations of the study (p. 23).