Author's response to reviews

Title: The courage to change: Patient perceptions of 12-Step fellowships

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Philippa Harris
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MS: 1301729979597536: The courage to change: Patients' perceptions of 12-Step fellowships

Thank you again for your interest in our paper. We have now revised the paper according to the comments from the reviewers and the editor. As requested, we have included some further details and information regarding the psychometric properties of the translated scales, and hope the paper now is acceptable.

A more detailed list of responses follows.

Yours Sincerely

John-Kåre Vederhus (on behalf of the authors)
Kristiansand, 19-Nov-11
Addiction Unit
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Norway
Reviewer Ulrich W. Preuss and Joachim Kugler

Overall we interpret both the reviewers to be satisfied with the revisions already made.

The minor typing error that was mentioned has been corrected (Discussion 2nd paragraph U.K.)

Editor's remarks

You should check Cronbach's alpha or KR-20 of the scales before calculating composite scores. Preferably, you should also look at the underlying factor structure of the data using a confirmatory factor analysis based on the scales of the original questionnaires as there are many examples of instruments that have different psychometric properties after translation.

The composite scores referred to are described on:
p7: "In addition, seven yes/no involvement items (e.g., read TSG literature, had a sponsor) were coded from 0 (no, never) to 1 (yes). The total TSG attendance and involvement scores resulted in a composite score that ranged from 0 to 9."

and

P7-8: "Questions were rated in a 5-point Likert-type response format, where higher scores indicated higher levels of the construct under assessment. A mean score was computed for each subscale (5 questions in each subscale)."

This study was not intended to be a formal validation study. Therefore the detailed examination of the psychometric properties of the instrument has not been given a focus in the manuscript. However, we understand the editor's concern and have now included some further details and information on the psychometric properties as described below. After formal statistical procedures to test the psychometric properties of the translated questionnaires, the authors are confident that the questionnaires perform as intended also in the Norwegian setting.

The scales mentioned are the AAAS and the SYRAAP. The SYRAAP use an ordinal 5-point Likert scale. The AAAS consists of two questions rated on an ordinal format and seven dichotomously scored (yes/no) items. To our understanding, the KR-20 is primarily used when all the items of the instrument are dichotomously scored. Thus, we use the Cronbach's alpha (as did the original authors) on both the AAAS and SYRAAP to calculate how consistent subject responses were among the questions. The analyses yielded satisfactory results on both instruments. All scales/sub-scales had r > 0.75; see added information on each instrument in methods section (P7 - 8).

As the SYRAAP consists of three subscales representing psychological constructs, we also examined the underlying factor structure of this instrument using factor analysis and compared with the scales of the original questionnaires. The principal axis factor analysis (with Promax rotation) showed that the Norwegian version had the same structure as the original version (with the same items in their respective sub-scales and the three sub-scales with Eigenvalue exceeding 1, explaining 61% of the variance) and all items had satisfactory factor loadings; > 0.4 (see P8).
The original AAAS was described as being a one-dimensional questionnaire capturing respondents' historic experiences with 12-step groups, and it is not measuring psychological constructs. Hence, we believe that a factor analysis of this questionnaire would be of limited value.

The Statistical analyses (P9) and Methodological considerations (P17) sections of the paper have been updated because of the revisions made.