Reviewer's report

Title: The Arabic version of the hospital survey on patient safety culture: a psychometric evaluation in a Palestinian sample

Version: 1 Date: 29 October 2012

Reviewer: Jeanette Jackson

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The HSOPSC is a widely used instrument which has been applied in many different health care settings throughout Europe, in the UK, etc. Therefore, the present study adds important value to existing literature by extending the application of the HSOPSC to the Arabic world and providing evidence for a sound psychometric instrument for assessing patient safety culture. Moreover, the authors emphasise the validation process as the major strength of their study starting with thorough translation procedures, as well as involving experts' opinions to establish face and content validity of the translated HSOPSC version, which is very impressive and enhances the quality of this Arabic version. There are some minor essential revisions recommended before publication, mainly related to the structure of presenting the construct validation results. More detailed comments follow below.

Abstract

(1) The abstract reads very well.

Background

(2) The first paragraph would need some minor revisions. In particular, the authors provide a range for adverse event rates (2.5 to 18%) for the Eastern Mediterranean and then state that about 1% of these cases are associated with disability and about 2% with death as an outcome. Do these estimates relate to 2.5%, 18%, or the average of this adverse event rate range? In addition, 83% of these events could have been prevented which is quite high, given that in other countries about 50% of adverse events could have been prevented. Maybe this fact would be also important to highlight in the discussion?

(3) The second paragraph states that patient safety culture assessment provides insights into organizational culture and latent conditions and it would be easier for the reader if the authors could provide some examples in brackets: ‘aspects of the organizational culture (e.g., ...) ... on latent conditions (e.g., ...)’.

Method

(4) In the first paragraph, when mentioning the current best practice for survey translation, should the references read [19 to 23]?

(5) When it comes to construct validity, the structure of describing the statistical
analysis can be improved which would help to also better structure presenting the study findings. My suggestion would be to first mention the cross-validation technique (i.e., splitting the whole sample randomly) in order to then conduct 1) EFA on ‘the training subset’ to explore whether there is an optimal (alternative) factorial structure; 2) CFA on the ‘test subset’ to test if either the original or the alternative factorial structure better fits when assessing patient safety culture in the Arabic health care setting; 3) reliability analysis comparing the original 12 dimensions (US versus Arab), as well as comparing the optimal (alternative) 11 proposed dimensions (EFA sample versus CFA sample versus whole sample).

(6) Recoding negatively worded items should be done for all statistical analysis (EFA, CFA, reliability analysis).

Results

(7) As mentioned in comment 5, I would strongly recommend reconsidering the structure of presenting the results demonstrating construct validity, i.e., starting with the process of exploring if there is an alternative factorial structure, testing if the original or alternative factorial structure fits better and then also provide insights into the reliabilities of the original and alternatively proposed dimensions.

Discussion

(8) The discussion reads very well! Just some numbering of references got a bit mixed up (i.e., the Turkey study should be ref28 instead of 30; the studies about leaders and organisational readiness should be ref29 and 30 instead of 31 and 32; the two references in the conclusion should be ref 31 and 32 instead of 28 and 29). One minor typo was in the second paragraph of the discussion - having twice the word ‘on’ in the fourth sentence.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests