Author's response to reviews

Title: Development and preliminary validation of a Greek-language outpatient satisfaction questionnaire with principal components and multi-trait analyses.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editors,

We submit the revised manuscript, which is now entitled “Development and preliminary validation of a Greek-language outpatient satisfaction questionnaire with principal components and multi-trait analyses”. Our reply to each individual reviewer’s comments and suggestions follows in the next pages.

Yours faithfully,

Vassilis Aletras
AUTHORS’ REPLY TO COMMENTS MADE BY REVIEWER DR. GARRATT

COMMENT 1

The paper has been radically reorganized in order for instance not to mix methods in the Results section. We have indeed used the same subheadings within the Methods and the Results sections, as requested by the reviewer.

COMMENT 2

Following the suggestions of the reviewer, we explained in more detail the development of the items by stating the kind of literature search performed and the criteria employed (page 5, last paragraph). We also provided info about the observations carried out, the interviews and the clinic settings (page 6).

Regarding the pretesting, we explained in more detail the processes that informed the revisions of the instrument and the selection of the subjects (pages 6-7).

COMMENT 3

We now discuss the choice of mode of administration in more detail (including social desirability bias), using additional references, and provide evidence why we expected a low response rate from mail surveys (page 8 of the revised manuscript), rather than report ad hoc the opinion of private sector market researchers.

COMMENT 4

All these issues are now explained in detail on page 9.

COMMENT 5

On page 10 we explain how we retrieved the patient information to make the calls, whereas on pages 13-14 the response rates are now fully explained.

COMMENT 6

It is true that we adopted the confusion that seems to be prevailing even in textbooks. We do agree however that the mathematics differs and the two techniques should not be confused. We therefore substituted all the terminology using PCA jargon (e.g. page 15).

COMMENT 7

We have incorporated these data in Table 3, as requested by the reviewer.

COMMENT 8

It is true that the argument made by Krowinski and Steiber about the optimality of such a long period is not convincing, given the remarks of the reviewer. And indeed
an interval that long is far from typical in research work, as we have now found out. Nevertheless, we could not find a relevant empirical reference examining the optimal period that must be used in practice or assessing the magnitude of any adverse effect that might be related to the use of non-optimal intervals. Our intraclass correlations are indeed high however. We hence rephrased in the manuscript and no longer claim optimality or typical use of this interval. The fact that correlations are high is also now pinpointed in the text (page 11, 3rd paragraph and page 16, 1st paragraph).

COMMENT 9

We explain patient selection on page 11, 4th paragraph and rephrase since we agree with the reviewer.

COMMENT 10

We have assessed external validity by testing appropriate assumptions (page 16, 4th paragraph and Table 6, page 35).

COMMENT 11

These data can now be found in Table 3. Also, additional explanation is provided in the Discussion Section (pages 18-19).

COMMENT 12

We now compare the results to other findings from Greece and also state the limitations of the study (page 19).

We thank the reviewer for his comments and hope we have adequately considered and incorporated his suggestions.
AUTHORS’ REPLY TO COMMENTS MADE BY REVIEWER DR. LABARERE

Major Recommendation 1

As suggested we have included the rationale for developing a new instrument rather than using one of the existing. The idiosyncratic nature of Greek outpatient clinics is discussed on pages 4 (3rd paragraph) and 5 (1st & 2nd paragraph) of the revised manuscript.

Major Recommendation 2

Patient characteristics are now presented in Table 2 (page 29).

Major Recommendation 3

We now discuss the limitations of our study in the Discussion Section, on page 19 (2nd paragraph).

Minor Recommendation 1

Indeed we shortened the result section in order not to confuse the reader with many details. Mainly shortening the Principal Component Analysis did this (pages 14-17).

Minor Recommendation 2

We believe that the adoption of this recommendation made Table 2 much more readable and still informative Note that in the revised manuscript the information of Table 2 is now being conveyed by Table 4 (page 32).

Minor Recommendation 3

We have simplified not only Table 5 but also Table 4. In fact, some of the information of Table 4 (item-total correlations) can now be found in Table 3 in the revised manuscript, whereas discriminant validity tests have been more simply presented in the new Table 5 (page 34).

Minor Recommendation 4

We agree and have used the term “preliminary validation” in the title, in the abstract (page 2) and elsewhere in the text (page 20, 1st paragraph).

Minor Recommendation 5

As requested by both reviewers we have radically rearranged the paper content in order not to confuse the readers, and avoided e.g. mixing methods in the Results section.

We thank the reviewer for his comments and hope we have adequately considered and incorporated his suggestions.