Reviewer’s report

Title: Measuring factors that influence the utilisation of preventive care services provided by General Practitioners in Australia

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Reviewer: Birgitta Öberg

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Review of the manuscript Measuring factors that influence the utilisation of preventive care services provided by General practitioners in Australia

The paper focuses on an interesting area of research that aims to develop better and more standardised scales to study factors that influence utilisation of preventive care provided by general practitioners. The paper includes a conceptual framework and tries to identify already existing scales in relation to that model. The problem can be that the scales chosen are not developed from the same framework and the analysis is limited to the scales one by one. Even with these questions in mind, the paper still has a value. The paper needs a major compulsory revision before it can be considered for publication.

Introduction

The background presents interesting results from previous studies but the link to the conceptual framework is weak and could be more clearly defined.

The aim of the study is not clearly stated.

Methods

The steps in the methods are stated and relevant but it is confusing that the authors state that they are developing scales instead of identifying existing scales and later on adapting them.

The methods section includes both how it was performed and reports on results. It would be better to divide this.

In the methods section, the identification of domains does not link to the chosen conceptual model. This is not wrong but one can wonder if the conceptual model did influence the choice of domains at all.

In the section development of items and scales, the process for identifying relevant scales is unclear and what influence the authors for the scales had is not fully described.

The number of items seems different in text and tables.

The development of the items to assess availability and accessibility is unclear “developed based on the literature review on determinants of health services utilisation.” It is hard to follow what is new and what is based on previous scales and why these choices are made.
The same problem is the last sentence under the domain of individual-level factor…….
Where does the value of health come from?

Development of questionnaire
It is hard to understand what changes were introduce after the review.

Pre-testing
Again what changes were introduced?

Evaluating psychometric properties
Under analysis it is stated that face and content validity were evaluated during their development. The results from that is hard to follow and it is presented under the method section. Se previous comment. It is a mix of presentation of results and methods and under this section the different ways used to analyse the data should be presented and this should be done before the results of is presented.

The choice of PCA is correct It is hard understand why the authors choose to develop different scales and than only perform separate PCAs A recommendation is to include all factorloadings in table 3 even if it is stated that 0.5 was the cut off. A factor analysis of the whole material including standardisation could give information if the chosen domains are separate from each other.

The results of missing data is unclear and need to be strengthened How many items were missing and for what reason?

Discussion and conclusion
I do not agree that the conceptual framework was the basis for the choice of scales and items It is also a bit confusing if the authors refere to the scales solely or to the full 7 9 item version.

It is good that the authors discuss the shortcomings from the lack of full representativeness of their sample.

In the conclusion it must be clarified that the scales has not been analysed together and that the factoranalysis is performed only within each scale and therefore the validity of the whole questionnaire has not yet been proven.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.