Reviewer's report

**Title:** Validation of the Short Form Health Survey Version 2 and the Walter Reed Visual Assessment Scale on a sample of adults with scoliosis: an Australian perspective.

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 16 July 2007

**Reviewer:** Sue-Min Lai

**Reviewer's report:**

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. Page 4, the authors wrote "A broad sampling technique was used to approach support groups, orthopaedic specialists and ..." A broad sampling technique is simply not clear enough to inform readers exactly how study subjects were selected and/or recruited for the study. What are the eligibility criteria for study subjects to be included in the study? What are the characteristics of study respondents' scoliosis condition? A description of demographics and clinical characteristics of these study participants will be extremely informative.

2. The paper is not organized in a format that is acceptable to major medical journals. Currently analytical methods are mixed with the results throughout the paper. There is no description in the Methods section on how SF-36 v2 and the WRVAS will be validated. There is not a section of statistical analysis in the Method section as well.

3. The topic of this study can be of interest when validating the said two scales in Australian scoliosis patients. However, simply correlating SF-36 v2 responses with subjects' age, sex and the Australian SF-36 v2 Norms are inconsequential when no clinical measurements were obtained and described for a further inference. This paper showed no validation of SF-36 v2. Instead, the authors have characterized responses from their participants using SF-36 v2.

4. I would suggest that the authors do not use psychometric properties since they did not evaluate all the necessary psychometric properties when evaluating WRVAS.

5. A small sample size is a serious limitation to this study.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?:** Reject as not sufficiently sound

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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