Author’s response to reviews

Title: Norm Values and Psychometric Properties for the German Health Regulatory Focus Scale – Results of a Representative Survey

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Author’s response to reviews:

We also included the response letter as a word document for improved readability.

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BMRM-D-18-00412R2
Norm Values and Psychometric Properties for the German Health Regulatory Focus Scale – Results of a Representative Survey
Bjarne Schmalbach; Markus Zenger; Elmar Brähler; Katja Petrowski
BMC Medical Research Methodology

Dear Dr. Schmalbach,

Your manuscript "Norm Values and Psychometric Properties for the German Health Regulatory Focus Scale – Results of a Representative Survey" (BMRM-D-18-00412R2) has been assessed by our reviewers. They have raised a number of points which we believe would improve the manuscript and may allow a revised version to be published in BMC Medical Research Methodology.
Their reports, together with any other comments, are below. Please also take a moment to check our website at https://www.editorialmanager.com/bmrm/ for any additional comments that were saved as attachments.

If you are able to fully address these points, we would encourage you to submit a revised manuscript to BMC Medical Research Methodology.

Once you have made the necessary corrections, please submit online at:

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If you have forgotten your password, please use the 'Send Login Details' link on the login page at https://www.editorialmanager.com/bmrm/. For security reasons, your password will be reset.

Please include a cover letter with a point-by-point response to the comments, describing any additional experiments that were carried out and including a detailed rebuttal of any criticisms or requested revisions that you disagreed with. Please also ensure that all changes to the manuscript are indicated in the text by highlighting or using track changes.

Please also ensure that your revised manuscript conforms to the journal style, which can be found at the Submission Guidelines on the journal homepage.

A decision will be made once we have received your revised manuscript, which we expect by 05 Mar 2020.

Please note that you will not be able to add, remove, or change the order of authors once the editor has accepted your manuscript for publication. Any proposed changes to the authorship must be requested during peer-review, and adhere to our criteria for authorship as outlined in BioMed Central's policies. To request a change in authorship, please download the 'Request for change in authorship form' which can be found here - http://www.biomedcentral.com/about/editorialpolicies#authorship. Please note that incomplete forms will be rejected. Your request will be taken into consideration by the editor, and you will be advised whether any changes will be permitted. Please be aware that we may investigate, or ask your institute to investigate, any unauthorized attempts to change authorship or discrepancies in authorship between the submitted and revised versions of your manuscript.
I look forward to receiving your revised manuscript and please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Best wishes,

Anna Melidoni, PhD
BMC Medical Research Methodology
https://bmcmedresmethodol.biomedcentral.com/

Editor Comments:

Please address all of the reviewer's comments carefully.

BMC Medical Research Methodology operates a policy of open peer review, which means that you will be able to see the names of the reviewers who provided the reports via the online peer review system. We encourage you to also view the reports there, via the action links on the left-hand side of the page, to see the names of the reviewers.

Reviewer reports:

Reviewer 2 (Reviewer 3): PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:

OBJECTIVE - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses one or several testable research questions? (Brief or other article types: is there a clear objective?)

Yes - there is a clear objective

DESIGN - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?

Not sure - key details are missing from the manuscript
EXECUTION - Are the experiments and analyses performed with sufficient technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?
Not sure - key details are missing from the manuscript

STATISTICS - Is the use of statistics in the manuscript appropriate?
Not sure - I am not able to assess the statistics in this study

INTERPRETATION - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?
No - there are minor issues

OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Has the author addressed your concerns sufficiently for you to now recommend the work as a technically sound contribution? If not, can further revisions be made to make the work technically sound?
No - manuscript has some fundamental flaw(s)

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: Although reviewer 1 comments have been addressed, I do not feel that reviewer 2 concerns have been appropriately resolved. As reviewer 2 points out, this study and the results does have the ability to bring insight to this research area. However, the paper continues to be hard to follow (results are in the methods, details of the approach (including recruitment) are missing from the methods, abstract is not following the normal structure, etc. I feel that at this time the manuscript is not ready for publication.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:
The design of the study needs to be more detailed including a figure of number of households contacted, number responded, number of questions excluded b/c of missing data, etc. The text eludes to some of these details but it is sparse and not succinct. Once more details are included re the methods and design the reviewer can properly assess if the study was appropriately executed. Similarly, once paper is updated the reviewer can asses the acceptability of both the statistics and interpretation.
Dear Dr. Melidoni,

thank you for the opportunity to further improve upon the quality of our submission.

We are attaching a revised version of the manuscript and you may find below our point-by-point responses to the provided suggestions and how we strove to implement them in the manuscript.

We are confident that the manuscript has improved substantially as a result. Please do not hesitate to contact us with concrete suggestions should further issues emerge during the review process.

Many thanks and best regards,

Bjarne Schmalbach

GENERAL COMMENTS: Although reviewer 1 comments have been addressed, I do not feel that reviewer 2 concerns have been appropriately resolved. As reviewer 2 points out, this study and the results does have the ability to bring insight to this research area. However, the paper continues to be hard to follow (• results are in the methods,

The only “results” that were reported in the Method section was the description of the participants and the reliability coefficients for the utilized scales. In the revision, we moved the sample description into the Results section. However, we kept the reliability coefficients in the Method section as this is clearly a description of the Instruments we used and the customary way of reporting in psychological and medical research.

• details of the approach (including recruitment) are missing from the methods,

We are grateful for this suggestion and added several important details about our approach for recruitment and data collection.

• abstract is not following the normal structure

In the Abstract, we follow the guidelines provided by BMC Medical Research Methodology in the submission guidelines. Accordingly, we structured the Abstract in these parts: Background, Methods, Results, and Conclusions. If this is not acceptable, please let us know how we should modify the Abstract.
REQUESTED REVISIONS:

The design of the study needs to be more detailed including a figure of number of households contacted, number responded, number of questions excluded b/c of missing data, etc. The text eludes to some of these details but it is sparse and not succinct. Once more details are included re the methods and design the reviewer can properly assess if the study was appropriately executed. Similarly, once paper is updated the reviewer can assess the acceptability of both the statistics and interpretation.

Thank you for providing these helpful comments. We added a figure of the sample flow to help facilitate understanding of the recruitment process. If any additional issues come up, please let us know how we could further improve the submission.