Author’s response to reviews

Title: Trust and Respect in the Patient-Clinician Relationship Preliminary Development of a New Scale

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Fredrik Falkenstrom (Reviewer 1): Review of PSYD-19-00184 "Trust and Respect in the Patient-Clinician Relationship: Preliminary Development of a New Scale"

One thing though, if the mean of the item is represented as zero on the latent trait scale (the X-axis of Figure 1), then the measure seems to mostly be able to differentiate among low levels of trust since the information curve slope goes steeply down at around zero? So at levels above the mean/zero of the latent trait, there is basically no information at all. Not sure if this is a major problem with the scale, perhaps low levels of trust are more important to discriminate than high levels, but if this is so it should probably be stated.

We now mention that the scale primarily is good at differentiating lower levels of trust (which as reviewer 2 indicates, is typical for these types of scales) (p. 13, lines 267-271 in Results and p. 14, lines 306-310 in Discussion).

(Very minor) On p. "One study of 17 clinicians and 48 clinicians …" I assume it should have been 48 patients?

Correction made to indicate 48 patients (p. 5, line 100).

Robert Hatcher, PhD (Reviewer 2):
The literature review is well developed for the trust variable, but not so much for the respect variable, so it seems unbalanced and less convincing for the latter. I would recommend a better review and argument for including respect in the questionnaire.

In part the imbalance the reviewer points out is related to the relative lack of attention regarding respect as a variable in the psychotherapy literature. This lack of attention is one justification for the inclusion of respect in the scale. Another justification is that in multiple health care
environments (outside of psychotherapy), respect has been identified as a potentially important variable. We now expand upon this (p. 7, lines 142-151).

A minor point, I would suggest using the term "negatively worded" for "reversed scored" on p. 9, line 179.

Change made (p. 9, line 188).

Did the researchers ask respondents whether they posted to social media? I would think this would be important in conjunction with their answer to the question of whether they would share their posts?

Yes, we did ask if they posted to social media. Although we considered restricting the analyses to only those who currently post, our assumption was that those who don’t post might not in part because of a lack of trust regarding sharing posts and thus are indicating that they wouldn’t share even if they did post. Slightly less than 10% did not post. About 40% of those who did not post indicated they were not willing to share any posts (presumably if they ever decided to post). So we retain our original analyses that includes even those who do not currently post.

I was puzzled by the description of the test information curve given lines 259-260 on p. 13 ("The curve peaks slightly below the mean with another peak at the mean") -- it looks to me that there is one peak slightly below the mean (theta = 0) and another, somewhat larger peak 2SD below the mean, and that the information curve drops quite precipitously between the mean and about +.5 SD above the mean. This is pretty typical for scales with generally high means, like this scale, with item means uniformly above 6 on a 7 point scale. This means that more reliable information is obtained from clients rating their trust & respect relatively lower than the average patient -- probably the range that would be of more interest to clinicians at least. I would recommend revisiting this part of the results/discussion section with a bit more elaboration in each.

We have revised our description of the two peaks and provide more detail in the Results (p. 13, lines 267-271). As mentioned above, we have also added a paragraph on this issue in the Discussion, highlighting the fact that more reliable information is obtained from clients rating lower than average (p. 14, line 306-310).