Reviewer’s report

Title: Can the Pain Attitudes and Beliefs Scale be adapted for use in the context of osteoarthritis with general practitioners and physiotherapists?

Version: 0 Date: 23 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Cornelia Helena Maria Van Den Ende

Reviewer's report:

This paper reports on the "utility" of an adapted version of the The Pain Attitudes and Beliefs Scale for Physiotherapists (PABS-PT) for osteoarthritis. The original scale explores clinicians' beliefs about low back pain, making a distinction between beliefs matching either a biomedical or biopsychological view. In the current study the same scale was used for patients with osteoarthritis by replacing "low back pain" with "osteoarthritis". Both physiotherapists and general practitioners were invited to participate in this study.

Main concerns:

- It is not very clear what is meant by "utility"? This concept should explicitly be clarified.

- One of the implicit research questions is to assess differences between professions. The relevance of this exercise should be substantiated and implications should be discussed.

- Authors put a lot of effort in describing differences in characteristics between GPs and physiotherapist, for example location of qualification, employment setting. For me, it is not clear to what extent and in what direction these characteristics potentially explain differences between professions.

- an important psychometric quality of questionnaires is validity. Authors did not address this important aspect; as osteoarthritis and low back pain are different conditions, validity can not be assumed.

- One of the findings of the current study is that the internal consistency of the behavioural subscale is insufficient. Yet, the authors make inferences about the behavioral scale, that seems not very

- L 262 and further: "This study suggested that a new condition-specific questionnaire is needed to assess clinicians' osteoarthritis -related health, illness and treatment beliefs. …" What are the arguments for this conclusion?
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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