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Rasch analysis of the Health Assessment Questionnaire Disability Index in psoriatic arthritis

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Background: The cross-cultural validity of the Health Assessment Questionnaire Disability Index (HAQ-DI) in psoriatic arthritis (PSA) has not been well studied.

Objectives: To assess the validity of the HAQ-DI in PSA and determine its invariance to different patient characteristics including culture.

Methods: We analysed HAQ-DI data from patients with PsA in 5 cultural regions (the UK, N. America, S. America, Europe and Asia) using Rasch analysis to determine the scale's construct validity, person separation index (PSI) reliability, unidimensionality, targeting and the invariance of the scale across patient characteristics (culture, age, gender, disease duration, disease type and extent of skin involvement).

Results: The dataset comprised 503 patients (286 women) from 15 countries. Their mean (SD) age was 50.8 (13.1), psoriasis duration, 18.4 (13.7) years and PSA duration, 9.8 (9.9) years.

Table 1 presents the summary statistics for the overall model fit (χ^2 interaction) and reliability (PSI). The fit statistics suggest adequate fit to the model and acceptable reliability in all individual cultural groups and except S. America and Asia where sample sizes were limited (not shown).

The HAQ-DI was unidimensional and invariant to all personal characteristics in the N. America dataset. In the pooled dataset, the HAQ-DI displayed differential item functioning (DIF) by type of arthritis, where those with oligoarthritis were more likely to have lower scores on the dressing & grooming item than those with polyarthritis. Floor effects were evident, especially in oligoarthritis. Using the DIF-free population (N. America), the HAQ-DI was shown to be well-targeted and discriminated well between the two types of arthritis (graph not shown).

Conclusions: In Europe and N America, HAQ-DI is a cross-culturally valid and reliable measure of disability in PsA and Rasch-transformed values can be used with confidence alongside other outcome measures in parametric analyses.

Region	χ^2 interaction statistic (P-value)	PSI Reliability
UK	8.5746 (0.379)	0.885
North America	5.299 (0.725)	0.860
Europe (excluding UK)	25.356 (0.064)	0.855
Pooled data	76.310 (0.037)	0.857

Table 1: Overall model fit statistics for HAQ-DI

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