

Evaluation of the internal structure of the Cyberchondria severity scale (CSS): A Factor analytic study

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Abstract

Background & Aim: Cyberchondria is a form of anxiety characterized by excessive health-related internet search. The aim of this study was to evaluate the factorial structure of the Persian version of the Cyberchondria severity scale, designed to measure individuals' anxiety about their own health status caused by excessive health-related internet search.

Methods: This is a descriptive /analytical study conducted on 228 students (154 males and 74 females) of Tabriz universities (Tabriz University, Payame Noor) through convenience sampling. Subjects completed the Cyberchondria severity scale questionnaire. Data were analyzed through exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis using SPSS 22 and Mplus 6.12 softwares.

Results: Although exploratory factor analysis identified a five-factor structure, further investigations showed that the four-factor structure is probably more suitable for Iranian population. The four discovered factors were named as: Compulsion, Excessiveness, Reassurance and Distress. In addition, the results of confirmatory factor analysis showed that the four-factor structure well fitted the data.

Conclusion: Findings suggest that the Persian version of the Cyberchondria severity scale is an appropriate tool to measure the severity of health anxiety caused by excessive health-related internet search. However, further research should be carried out in this field.

Keywords: Cyberchondria, psychometric properties, scale, exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, anxiety, internet, Patient Acceptance of Health Care