

ABSTRACT

The German Version of the Fremantle Back Awareness Questionnaire - transcultural adaptation and preliminary practicability findings

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Background

Chronic non-specific low back pain [NSCLBP] is a widespread health issue and can result in considerable long-term disability.

Structural and functional changes in the primary somatosensory cortex of the brain have been identified using brain imaging in NSCLBP patients, known as cortical reorganization ([Flor et al., 1997](#)). Cortical reorganization is associated with poor somatosensory functioning and bodily awareness of the back region in this patient group. Furthermore, it is proposed that this may contribute to the maintenance of pain in some patients. Being able to assess back bodily awareness may help to assess patients for altered bodily awareness and identify those who may be suitable for interventions designed to enhance somatosensory functioning e.g. sensory discrimination training.

The Fremantle Back Awareness Questionnaire [FreBaQ], comprising 9 items with 5 response categories, is currently the only questionnaire which purports to assess back-specific body perception in patients with NSCLBP ([Wand, 2014](#)),

Study Objectives

1. The translation and intercultural adaptation of the FreBaQ into German
2. The preliminary investigation of the German version of the FreBaQ regarding its practicability.

Methodology

1. The translation process comprised 5 stages with independent translations, translation syntheses, back-translations an expert committee consensus-building and a testing phase, following international recommendations ([Beaton et al., 2002](#)).
2. The practicability was then assessed by means of a feedback questionnaire comprising two dichotomous questions regarding comprehensibility and completeness of contents and one question addressing time exposure (assessed on a 10 point-rating scale: “0” indicating “unacceptably long” and “10” indicating “completely acceptable”).

Preliminary Results

The German version of the FreBaQ has been developed and, so far, assessed in 20 patients with NSCLBP. The Completion time was rated as “completely acceptable” or 10/10 by 19 of the 20 participants. Regarding comprehensibility 70% reported that all aspects were completely

understandable and 75% reported completeness of contents. Those who identified comprehensibility issues were asked to suggest alterations. As data collection is not yet complete, a definitive description and interpretation of all comments is not appropriate at this time.

Discussion

A German version of the FreBaQ has been developed using the methods of Beaton et al. (2002). Initial feedback from patients with NSCLBP is encouraging suggesting good levels of practicability along with minor suggestions for future development. Further investigation of the intra- and interrater reliability, as well as concurrent validity of the German version of the FreBaQ is currently underway.

References

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