

Development of the New York Misophonia Scale: Implications for Diagnostic Criteria

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Abstract : Misophonia is a condition in which specific repetitive oral, nasal, or other sounds and movements made by humans trigger impulsive aversive reactions of irritation or disgust that instantly become anger. A few measures exist for the assessment of misophonia, but each has some limitations, and evidence for a formal diagnosis is still lacking. The objective of this study was to develop a reliable and valid measure of misophonia for use in the general population. Adopting a purely descriptive approach, this study focused on developing a self-report measure using all triggers and reactions identified in previous studies on misophonia. A measure with two subscales, one assessing the aversive quality of various triggers and the other assessing reactions of individuals, was developed. Data were gathered from a large sample of both men and women ranging in age from 18 to 65 years. Exploratory factor analysis revealed three main triggers: oral/nasal sounds, hand and leg movements, and environmental sounds. Two clusters of reactions also emerged: nonangry attempts to avoid the impact of the aversive stimuli and angry attempts to stop the aversive stimuli. The examination of the psychometric properties of the scale revealed its internal consistency and test-retest reliability to be excellent. The scale was also found to have very good concurrent and convergent validity. Significant annoyance and disgust in response to the triggers were reported by 12% of the sample, although for some specific triggers, rates as high as 31% were also reported. These findings have implications for the delineation of the criteria for identifying misophonia as a clinical condition.

Keywords : adults, factor analysis, misophonia, psychometric properties, scale

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