Reviewer's report

Title: Social inhibition as a mediator of neuroticism and depression in the elderly

Version: 2 Date: 30 August 2011

Reviewer: Julie Wetherell

Reviewer's report:

In general, the authors did an adequate job of responding to reviewers' comments. I would prefer to see a few additional changes, as follows:

1. Abstract: "The variables found to be significantly associated with depression were younger age, lower levels of reasoning skills, social inhibition, and lack of emotional stability (neuroticism)." Also, "Lack of emotional stability is, along with younger age, the strongest predictor of depressive symptoms, but it can be mediated by social inhibition."

2. In general - use the same word or phrase for constructs consistently. For example, "reasoning skills" (which I prefer to "intellect") and "lack of emotional stability" or "emotional instability", both of which I prefer to "(inversed) emotional stability". Also, "socially inhibited interpersonal problem" seems to conflate two ideas: social inhibition, and interpersonal problems. The former is a personality trait, that latter is a situation. Better to rephrase as "social inhibition" or "socially inhibited interpersonal style," or "interpersonal problems caused by social inhibition", depending on what is meant (choose one and use it throughout the paper).

3. More information is still needed on the sample. It is now described as a "convenien(ce) sample", but does that mean participants responded to newspaper ads, or to flyers posted in social clubs, or by being approached in their doctors' waiting rooms, or what exactly? How many participants were invited, vs. how many refused?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.