Reviewer's report

Title: Is neuromyelitis optica related to tuberculosis?

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Reviewer: Diego Franciotta

Reviewer's report:

Using retrospective data, Li and Colleagues analyzed the association between neuromyelitis optica (NMO) and tuberculosis (TB). They found that the percentage of NMO patients with antecedent or coincidental pulmonary TB did not differ from that of neurological controls. Moreover, they compared demography, course, and CSF and neuroimaging features of NMO patients with those of patients with tuberculous meningitis (TBM), and found obvious and expected differences [e.g., NMO patients showed a higher relapse rate (75.0%) vs TBM patients (0%)]. Indeed, the two pathological conditions can be easily diagnosed presently, given the current knowledge and technologies.

The Authors have addressed an issue of very limited interest. Indeed, with exclusion of a few and dated case reports almost exclusively published when the NMO-specific antibodies were not known, the interest on the issue derives from an article published in a ‘niche journal’, namely the Int J Tuberc Lung Dis, in which Zatjurua et al reported an association between neuromyelitis optica (NMO) and tuberculosis (TB). Thus, I would advise Li and Colleagues to send the present article to that journal, or to condense the message in form of a short letter that, as such, might find space in appropriate journals.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests