Reviewer's report

Title: Self-esteem is associated with premorbid adjustment and positive psychotic symptoms in early psychosis.

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Reviewer: Tania Lecomte

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Review of article for BMC Self-esteem is associated with premorbid adjustment and positive psychotic symptoms in early psychosis.

This is an interesting article that attempts to understand in more depth the link between self-esteem, premorbid social adjustment and positive psychotic symptoms. The article presents a fairly thorough review of the literature on the subject, uses sound methods and analyses, and finds the links anticipated, as well as links with gender. A few points could be expanded in the text in order to help the reader (minor essential revisions):

1. The authors justify clearly the need for this study but in their review they do not address at all the issue of fluctuations in self-esteem as linked to positive symptoms, not just poor self-esteem – this should be mentioned and why fluctuations in self-esteem were not measured.

2. On p.5, following reference 23, there should be a sentence summing the information thus far.

3. On p.6, first par: This is of obvious importance… It is not so obvious to the reader, perhaps add a bit here on why it is so important. And if subsequent life deceptions can affect self-esteem, then why choose a global measure that is known to be stable across time?

4. Please explain the Sobel test for the novices…

5. P.13, following reference 14, the sentence is not clear, please explain – in fact grandiose delusions often hides poor self-esteem – in fact it is recommended to measure positive and negative self-esteem separately since grandiosity can be linked to high positive self-esteem and high negative self-esteem as well.

6. P.14, 2nd par: another explanation for the gender effect might be trauma? Women are more likely to have experienced sexual trauma and that is linked to self-concept and to positive symptoms. Has weight gain linked to medication also been measured? Women are often more affected in terms of their self-image then men in terms of weight gain.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable
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.