Reviewer's report

Title: Structural brain changes in First Episode Schizophrenia compared with Fronto-Temporal Lobar Degeneration: a meta-analysis

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Reviewer: Matthew Hoptman

Reviewer's report:

1. This is a very timely manuscript that uses anatomical likelihood estimation (ALE) meta-analytic methods to compare structural MRI deficits patients with first episode schizophrenia (FES) to patients with fronto-temporal lobar degeneration (FTLD). The results showed common gray matter deficits in bilateral caudate, left insula, and bilateral uncus regions. The paper is generally well written, and the results are interesting, but several issues need to be addressed.

Minor Essential Revisions

2. There are two main issues. First, the groups are radically different in age (as would be expected). This should at least be commented on. It might serve the authors well to refer to the concept of dementia praecox in this regard, because given the findings they report, it would seem that the FES results could be interpreted as accelerated brain aging.

3. Second, the authors should build a better case conceptually for comparing these disorders in the Introduction. One thing that might help is a broader discussion of the brain imaging changes that have been reported in schizophrenia (second sentence of the Introduction). Similarly, a summary of the FTLD results could be integrated in that paragraph to set the context for their quantitative analysis.

4. Other issues that seem relevant are:

   In the abstract, the authors should better clarify that the overlap measure is a test of similarity. Otherwise, the p value is confusing in that those are typically used to indicate difference.

5. A citation should be provided for PRISMA.

6. Page numbers should be provided.

Discretionary Revisions

7. It might be nice for the authors to tie their results to initiatives emphasizing a broader approach (for example, the RDOCS initiative).

8. In the last sentence before the Conclusions, the authors might want to be more specific as to what measures might be informative.
Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

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.