Reviewer's report

Title: Factors associated with chronic pain in patients with bipolar depression: a cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: Marloes Gerrits

Reviewer's report:

“Factors associated with chronic pain in patients with bipolar depression: a cross-sectional study” by Failde I et al.

This manuscript addresses the important question of the prevalence of pain in bipolar disorder; the subject is clinically relevant, considering the evidence of co-occurrence of pain and depressive disorder.

Advice on publication:

The article could be suitable for publication after compulsory revisions:

• If I understand the manuscript correctly, patients selected are bipolar patients who are currently depressed, thus “bipolar depressed (BD) patients”. I think it would be more appropriate to use this phrase rather than just “bipolar patients”, particularly in the research aims.

• The subsample of 121 participants is rather small. The reason why this particular subset of participants was chosen is not clearly stated. If I interpret the whole section, the participants are first time visitors of a psychiatrist with bipolar disorder and a current depressive disorder.

• Why are borderline results mentioned in the results section for factors associated with pain? Mention: Table 3 includes all factors with p<.10. All in all the sample size is small and the findings are not very convincing due to borderline significant results.

• The Discussion section could be more structured and focused on the findings. Page 10, line 20 the finding for delayed bipolar diagnosis could be more explored as it is mentioned as a crucial finding. Page 12, line 1 suicidal ideation was not associated with pain in Table 2.

Minor essential revisions:

• The writing could be improved; for instance the last sentence of Methods section in the Abstract and the long sentence in the Conclusions section of the Abstract is not clear to me.

• Headings and paragraphs in the Methods section could be improved.

• How were missing data or inconsistencies corrected (page 7, line 8)?

• Page 9, line 9 old age should be older age, similar to line 16. Page 9, line 10 (and page 8, second paragraph); “delayed bipolar disorder” was not a measure
reported as such in the Methods section. What is the rationale for this measure?

• The lay out of the Tables could be improved. How come there are missings on measures like gender and age?

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

**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