Reviewer's report

Title: Schizotypy and personality profiles of Cluster A in a group of schizophrenic patients and their siblings

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Reviewer: Albert Wong

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting paper that describes the ascertainment of schizoid personality traits in first degree relatives of patients with schizophrenia, the patients themselves and a group of unaffected controls. The authors seek to validate the use of a psychometric instrument administered by professional raters (SWAP-200) as an alternative to more traditional self-report tools. They report results similar to those previously found by using such self-report questionnaires, in which relatives of schizophrenia patients have scores intermediate between those of schizophrenia patients and control subjects.

Major Compulsory Revisions
However I do have some criticisms of the way in which the data were collected.
1) The authors did not use the same procedure to assess the patients and other subjects. The patients were assessed by their regular clinicians, who would know the patients much better than the interviewers of the siblings and unaffected controls. Thus the quality of data collected for the two sets of subjects will not be the same. The mere fact that the patients are identified as such represents a major bias in the observer rating of schizoid traits and features. All subjects should be assessed by a set of interviewers who are blind to diagnosis.
2) Also, the authors only use the interviewer-based instrument, but no self-report instrument as previous studies have done. So no direct comparisons are possible between the two. The authors argue that a rationale for using the observer-rated data is that it is more sensitive, so a direct comparison with more traditional self-report methods is required. Without it, this study generates observations that do not address the stated question that seems to be the main point of this paper.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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