Reviewer's report

Title: Differences in Treatment between Endogenous and Reactive Depression: From Questionnaires Answered from Over 500 Psychiatrists in Japan

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Reviewer: Steven Targum

Reviewer's report:

The authors' suggest that Japanese psychiatrists select treatment strategies based upon a binary system of diagnostic classification (endogenous versus reactive depression) despite the unitarian view currently employed by most classification systems like the DSM. This is a reasonable statement and the data from the three case illustrations completed by 500 psychiatrists support their argument.

However, these cases are a bit too obvious in my opinion. The reactive case developed only two weeks prior to seeking consultation in a forlorn man who had no previous history of psychiatric illness. Not surprisingly, the survey responding psychiatrists thought that his "over" reactive depressive symptom cluster would best respond to psychotherapy and some anxiolytics rather than antidepressants. Clearly, this "imaginary" patient required more time beyond his two weeks of dismay for further longitudinal assessment before antidepressants would be warranted.

The data would be much stronger if there were more illustrative cases and a less obvious distinction between the endogenous-reactive dichotomy as presented. On the other hand, the survey has already been completed and it would probably be difficult to start again. Therefore, I think the authors' need to acknowledge that three cases hardly make their "case" for psychiatrists making binary treatment decisions.

I would encourage the authors' to conduct a larger study with more cases.

The three existing case illustrations need editing in terms of English translations/grammar to make them clearer for English only speaking audiences.

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