Reviewer's report

**Title:** The longitudinal interplay between negative and positive symptom trajectories in patients under antipsychotic treatment: a post hoc analysis of data from a 1-year study

**Version:** 1 Date: 9 January 2013

**Reviewer:** Xiang-Yang zhang

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The authors examined the longitudinal pattern of positive and negative symptom domains and the interplay between them using the data from a multicenter, randomized, open-label, 1-year pragmatic trial of patients with schizophrenia spectrum disorder. Data from 399 patients who were treated with first- and second generation antipsychotics in the usual clinical settings. The PANSS was used at week 0, 1, 3, 9, 21, 33, and 49. Individual-based growth mixture modeling combined with interplay matrix was used to identify the latent trajectory patterns for both the negative and positive symptoms. Pearson correlation coefficients were used to examine the relationship between the changes of these two symptom domains. They identified 4 negative symptom trajectories and 3 positive symptom trajectories. Among 11 combined trajectory patterns formed from these positive and negative symptom trajectories, it is shown that negative and positive symptom trajectories moved generally in parallel. Further, correlation coefficients for changes in negative and positive symptom subscale scores were positive and statistically significant. Their results suggest that negative and positive symptoms were dependently related with each other.

The study is well designed. The scientific content of this manuscript is clear and the methods are clear. The results are interesting. The findings in the present study could provide addition information in the field. The manuscript is worthy of being published. If possible, I would suggest that the authors pay attention to the following comments:

1. Detailed information about the antipsychotic drugs used in the present study should be provided.
2. The results of PANSS at different time points should be present in a Table.
3. Whether there was a gender difference in the trajectory patterns for both the negative and positive symptoms or the relationship between the changes of negative and positive symptom domains?

**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.