Reviewer's report

Title: Functional social support, psychological capital, and depressive and anxiety symptoms among people living with HIV/AIDS employed full-time

Version: 1 Date: 31 August 2013

Reviewer: Alessandra Falco

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Minor Essential Revisions

This study is well built and to my opinion it makes a significant contribution to the literature on the issue approached by the authors. The methodological approach is correct. Specifically, the statistical analyses are particularly well conducted, as some of the most recent and powerful techniques designed to test the effect of mediation are used.

In conclusion, to my opinion this manuscript makes a significant enough contribution to the literature to warrant publication in the Journal "BMC Psychiatry" with minor essential revisions.

Background

P. 7. In the description of the objectives of the study, it would be appropriate that the authors explicit - because of the analyzes performed - also hypotheses about the role and weight of the single components of psychological capital in the process of mediation between social support and depressive and anxiety symptoms.

Statistical Analysis

1. P.12 : "All study variables were centralized before analyisis to ...". Do the authors mean standardized or centered (i.e., subtracting the mean of the predictor from each score of the predictor)? It would be appropriate to specify which transformation has been made, in order to make clearer understanding of the results.

2. In relation to the structural models tested, it would be appropriate to specify which matrices have been used to estimate the model (covariance/correlation matrix or polyserial correlation?). As well as the estimation method (Maximum Likelihood?). It would be also advisable to write in the text of the p-value associated with the #2.

Figure 1

1. It is not clear how the structure model depicted in Figure 1 was parameterized. For example, given that anxiety and depression are highly correlated with each other, was a correlation between the respective residues estimated? Furthermore, I see that the tested model has 18 degrees of freedom.
This should be due to the fact that, as previously specified and reported in the legend of Figure 1, the model checks the effect of covariates (age, gender, education, monthly income, cART Treatment, and months since HIV-seropositive) simultaneously. If so, I would write it in the text (also in relation to the model below).

Figure 2

1. It is not clear how the structural model depicted in Figure 2 was parameterized. Since the variables in the model are highly correlated with each other, was a correlation between the residuals of anxiety and depression estimated? And among the residuals of self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism? If so, I would write it in the text.

Conclusions

Among the limitations of the study, it would be advisable to highlight also the possible role of negative affectivity of respondents. The "mono method" approach used for this study (through the unique use of self-report measures to detect the causes and consequences), may have contributed to increase the correlations between the measures. The observed correlation between FSS and strain (Depressive symptoms, Anxiety symptoms) can thus be explained in the light of a third variable that determines both, namely the negative affectivity. See in this respect the study of Falco, A., Girardi, D., Marcuzzo, G., De Carlo, A., Bartolucci, G. B. (2013). Work stress and negative affectivity: A multi-method study. Occupational Medicine, 63(5), 341-347. DOI: 10.1093/occmed/kqt054

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests