Author's response to reviews

Title: Suicidal Behaviour in Old Age - Results from the Ibadan Study of Ageing (ISA)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
6/02/2012

The Editor,
BMC Psychiatry.

Dear Prof Menchetti,

REVISIOn OF MANUSCRIPT
RE: SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR IN OLD AGE- Results from the Ibadan Study of Ageing

We received the review of the above titled manuscript with thanks. The comments of the reviewers were carefully noted, and we have worked on the manuscript according to their insight. The following modifications have been made.

1. We have added more information to the description of the statistical methods, especially the application of appropriate weights to the data according to the sampling method used in the study. This is in response to Dr. Cohen’s concern about the description of the statistical models (queries 1 and 3).

2. Also in response to Dr. Cohen’s queries numbers 2, 12-14, and Prof. Pompili’s concern on suicide nomenclature, the methodology section now includes a description of the variables that appeared to be missing from the original manuscript. In particular, we have included a description of the background physical health of the sample, their social networks, as well as the definition of the suicidal experiences explored. The method used in estimating their economic status is validated and described in Ferguson et al, 2003 [reference number 21]. All instruments used were also subjected to cultural adaptation: thus, for example, the list of household items included items common in the cultural setting of the study. The original reference for the Kish selection criteria is included (reference 18).
3. The study we have reported is novel, in so far as there is no previous report of suicidal experiences in the country setting. We have therefore relied on evidence from previous reports from Southern India, as well as the WHO data bank on suicide from 10 countries (references 7,8,24, and 34). This is in response to Dr. Cohen’s queries numbers 8, 9, and 11.

4. We have made minor adjustments to the tables to clarify the concerns of Dr. Cohen about some of the variables. In particular, we have included descriptive terms for the economic categories, and clarified the marital status. Separated as used in the text refers to all separation from a marital union as shown on the tables, and as described in the discussion section.

5. We have also looked through the manuscript to add citations were they were missing, and correct semantic and syntactic errors. We also added some additional information on the limitation of the study.

We hope these modifications are acceptable.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr. Akin Ojagbemi 06/02/12