Reviewer's report

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

Version: 1 Date: 20 December 2012

Reviewer: Alex Cohen

Reviewer's report:

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISIONS:

1) I do not have the statistical skills to give a definitive opinion, but it appears to me that the statistical methods are not described adequately.
2) Many of the variables in the tables are not reported or described in the methods section.
3) The statistical models are not described and, therefore, it is difficult to assess the findings.
4) The authors should discuss the possible bias introduced by the collection of data concerning suicidal behavior since the age of 65 years. This approach means that a person of 75 years has a much greater chance of experiencing such behavior than a person of 67 years.
5) In the tables, the economic groups categories seem to be the same as the formal education categories – and do not reflect the economic groups as described in the methods section.
6) Table 3 is not mentioned in the text and doesn’t seem to be necessary.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS:

7) The following sentence is in need of rewriting: "Over 10 times these numbers of attempts have frequently been reported."
8) In the first paragraph of the Background section, the authors should identify in which countries the data were collected – references 3 to 9 represent worldwide, European and country specific findings.
9) Is it possible, in the Background section, to cite relevant data from Nigeria?
10) The following sentence, ‘It is difficult to predict precisely, and has numerous associated factors which may be biological, psychosocial or an inter-play of these factors,’ should include citations.
11) The statement, ‘The elderly with suicidal intention are less likely to communicate this to people around them,’ is based on US data. The authors should indicate this and state whether any similar data exist for older adults in Nigeria.
12) Need a citation for ‘Kish table selection method’
13) ‘Lifetime experience of each outcome is explored and if the subject answers
in the affirmative, the age of the subject at the first ever experience, the last experience and current experience are then determined. The subject is further asked to state the number of times each event has ever occurred and if suicidal attempt resulted in some injury or needed medical attention. All of this information is important and should be included in a table.

14) Describe the process by which all the instruments were culturally adapted.

15) In the Results section, ‘widowed’ is used as the marital status while ‘separated’ is used in Table 1. Separated is not the same as widowed. Make consistent and indicate whether the category included both widowed and separated.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I have not competing interests