Reviewer's report

Title: Hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis functioning and dysfunctional attitude in depressive patients with and without childhood neglect

Version: 1
Date: 2 January 2014
Reviewer: Qingrong Tan

Reviewer's report:

Major points
1. The description was very confused and lack of English logic, for example, author described “At present, many studies have shown that patients with depression have hyperactivity in HPA axis functioning, suggesting that HPA axis hyperactivity may be the outcome of childhood trauma and a predisposing factor to depression rather than the outcome of depression[1].” In addition, they only cited one reference to present “many studies”.

“one study reported decreased cortisol awakening response after early loss experience [12], but another that found parental loss was associated with increased cortisol awakening responses[13].” is a grammatically wrong sentence. It might be “one study reported that the cortisol awakening response was decreased after early loss experience [12], but another study found that parental loss was associated with increased cortisol awakening responses[13].”

There were so many similar errors in the whole manuscript!

2. Two-way ANOVA may be more suitable for the analysis of results, and the analysis method of ANOVA should be mentioned. The method of Pearson correlations was used only when the data was normal distributed, so the authors should testify the normal distribution of the data.

Minor points:
The references were not consistent in the manuscript, such as page 3, line 2 “adulthood[1-6].” and line 4 “in depression [7, 8].” I think there should be a space between “adulthood” and “[1-6].”
There are many grammar mistakes in the manuscript.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.