Author's response to reviews

Title: Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Patients with Traumatic Brain Injury

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Dear editors,

Based on the reviewers' comments, we have made several minor changes to the manuscript. They are listed in detail below.

1. Comment by Todd Buckley:

"The manuscript should be re-read for errors in grammar. Although not fatal, there are several areas where the language is a bit rough. In a similar vein, please examine the sentence starting with "Thus, apart from the degree of physical injury" on page 4. This sentence seems awkward and misplaced."

The sentence starting with "Thus, apart from the degree of physical injury" on page 4 has been removed. Minor grammatical errors have been corrected.

"On page 4 under "Severity of TBI", it is not true that characteristics of the event are unrelated to development of PTSD. Several studies reveal that the nature of the event (e.g., manmade vs. natural disaster) and the severity of the event relate (albeit modestly), with PTSD development. Please change."

The paragraph in question has been changed in the following way: On the one hand, it might be argued that the more severe the TBI, the more severe the accident and, thus, the more likely PTSD is to occur. Indeed, it has been found that the nature of the traumatic event and the development of PTSD are related. However, when only victims of traffic accidents are taken into consideration, there doesn't seem to be a direct relationship between characteristics of the accident and the likelihood of the development of a PTSD [10].

2. Comment by Ehud Klein

"1. The authors state that 46 inpatients consented to participate in the study. They do not, however, provide any further information regarding their sample selection procedure. At a minimum, the authors should check and report on the size and composition (i.e., conscious versus unconscious) of the initial subject pool and how many inpatients (from each type) were approached for participation in the study.

In addition, they should compare those who agreed to participate with those who declined to participate on key socio-demographic variables. Clearly, without this information it is impossible to rule out potential sample selection biases (e.g., "unconscious" inpatients agreeing less to participate), and to ascertain that the two groups are indeed representative of their correspondent populations (i.e., conscious versus unconscious survivors)."
On page 5 under "Methods - Participants" the following sentence has been inserted: All patients who fulfilled these criteria and who were newly admitted to the rehabilitation unit over a period of four months were invited to participate in the study. Only three out of 49 patients who had been asked refused to participate.

"2. The key independent variable in the study was loss of consciousness during the trauma. No information, however, is provided with respect to this variable was measured or determined. Based on patients' self recollection? reviews of medical chart? Glasgow Comma Scale? Etc. No doubt, this needs explication."

At the end of the paragraph "Methods - Participants" the following sentence has been inserted: Loss of consciousness was determined both through patients self recollection and through medical record whereby the two sources of information were congruent for all cases.

"3. On the bottom of page 6, there is a reference to eight out of 32 unconscious patients. This figure is inconsistent with the number of unconscious patients in the rest of the paper. This requires correction or further explaining."

The error has been corrected.