Reviewer’s report

Title: Are the Elderly More Vulnerable to Psychological Impact of Natural Disaster? A Population-Based Survey of Adult Survivors of the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake

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Reviewer: Frank Chou

Reviewer’s report:

This is a population-based study that was conducted 15 months after the 2008 Sichuan earthquake to assess whether elderly survivors were more likely to develop posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and general psychiatric morbidity. This study seems to have some contributions to post earthquake related themes. However, there are some major concerns should be clarified.

Methodology

(1) Sampling: Although the authors described how to sample in detail. I wonder whether the number of elder group is equal to younger group (138)? Is it convenience sampling or random sampling?

(2) Classification problem: The authors seem to divide the respondents into two groups by dichotomy (>=60 and <60). The range of age in younger adults is too broad. Please explain in detail (e.g. the distribution of age range in younger adults. Otherwise, the authors should explain why they divide respondents by dichotomy.)

(3) In page 9-10: The result showed that“ Information was gathered from 138 elders and 138 younger adults, and the response rates for the two groups were 90.8% and 78.9%, respectively.’ The response rate in the younger group was significantly lower than the elder one. Is there any bias?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'