Reviewer's report

Title: Surveying of Relationship between Anxiety, Depression and Duration of Infertility

Version: Date: 12 December 2003

Reviewer: secondo fassino

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General
The objective of this paper is to survey the relationship between anxiety, depression and duration of infertility in a sample of infertile couples. The subject is a very interesting one, and this paper may support the evidence in literature. However it is not clear which are the new elements distinguishing this paper from those already existing in literature. The paper is well written and the title is appropriate.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
1. Introduction: the Authors do not mention some recent papers on the issue they discuss. The introduction thus lacks some relevant references.
2. Methods: the questionnaires used should be described with more detail and some references about them should be cited. Which BDI version was used? Which are the cutoffs used to describe the depression stages? How were the causes of infertility investigated?
3. Discussion: references are scarce also in this section of the paper. The limits of the study should be discussed with more detail. Moreover the results should be discussed after revising the adequacy of the statistical analysis.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
4. page 2 line 11 BDI = spell out: in the results section, data should be presented in a clearer way, separating descriptive analyses from correlation and association analyses. It is often difficult to understand whether in the text the Authors refer to individuals or couples: e.g. page 4 they refer to depressed couples, but what does this exactly mean? The chi-square value should be reported in the tables. Explain the basis on which subjects were subdivided according to infertility duration in 1-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-9 years.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
5. The statistical analyses displays some problems. Chi-square values should be reported when presenting the results, for the study of the association of categorical variables.
6. Continuous and categorical variables can not be correlated with Pearson’s method, but Spearman’s correlation should be used. Though dichotomous variables can be codified in SPSS as 0 and 1 and used as continuous variables, this is a forced situation which should be underscored and discussed. A linear regression might provide more reliable results. Last, data analysis should investigate also the possible correlations between anxiety and depression in the sample studied.

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes