Reviewer's report

**Title:** Electroacupuncture upregulates ERK signaling pathways and promotes adult hippocampal neural progenitors proliferation in a rat model of depression

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 11 June 2013

**Reviewer:** Seung-Tae Kim

**Reviewer's report:**

In the paper “Electroacupuncture upregulates ERK signaling pathways and promotes adult hippocampal neural progenitors proliferation in a rat model of depression”, authors aimed at investigating the anti-depressive effect of electroacupuncture, and this experiment was well designed and the suitable discussion also is done supported by the data presented. But this study had no electroacupuncture control group. Therefore it is elusive that the anti-depressive effect is due to the electroacupuncture stimulation.

1. For this study had no electroacupuncture control group, it is difficult to judge or evaluate the results whether it is due to electrical stimulation dependent or acupoint specific effect. To verify that the electroacupuncture stimulation is more like pain stimulation for depression, electroacupuncture control group to receive sham stimulation at the same acupoints or real electrical stimulation at different acupoints is required.

2. In discussion paragraph, the reason why electroacupuncture stimulation did not clearly increase time spent in Open Arms after 4 weeks should be discussed.

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

**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.