Reviewer’s report

Title: Perception and Beliefs about Mental Illness among Adults in Karfi Village, Northern Nigeria

Version: Date: 12 July 2004

Reviewer: Samir All-Adawi

Reviewer’s report:

General
Overall, the manuscript deserves amendment in focus and organization. The authors briefly touch a number of topics but these needs to be presented in sequential and logical format. If the content of the assessment measures are known (and results are depicted properly), then focus would be enriched and so the quality of the paper.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

(1) The development of the assessment measure needs to be detailed in the text. The reader would benefit on how semi-structured qualitative was constructed, piloted etc.

(2) There is discrepancy of what the authors claimed to have found in the discussion and the content of the “RESULT” and accompanying Tables. For example, the authors claimed that ‘literacy was found to be significantly associated with positive attitude toward mentally sick’ (pg. 9, para 3) but how such conclusion was reached is not clear in the result section.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

The cited references in the text are sometime not in synch with the reference section. For example, Asuni et al. is cited in pg 3 (reference # 5) but in the reference section itself, #5 is Szas (The Myth of Mental Illness). Consistent and correct referencing is needed.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The reader often is not informed what constituted ‘positive view/feelings/sympathy towards mentally sick.

The above-mentioned manuscript appears to charts importance issue on how different culture construct explanatory model for what is known as psychiatry distress in biomedical nosology. One conspicuous implication of this study is that the psychiatric fraternity or biomedical caregivers ought to decipher content of their patients’ distress in accordance with the socio-cultural background. This important information needs to be covered in the discussion

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

Level of interest: An article of limited interest
Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
None