Reviewer's report

Title: Effect of religiosity/spirituality and sense of coherence on depression within a rural population in Greece: the Spili III project

Version: 2 Date: 22 March 2015

Reviewer: David H Rosmarin

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript builds on several recent studies by the authors on the relevance of religion/spirituality (R/S) and sense of coherence (SOC) to health-related issues in a rural Greek sample of primary care patients. The focus on depression in the present manuscript is sensible and builds on other research elsewhere on the subject, by expanding its cross-cultural relevance to the sample under study. The following revisions are intended to strengthen the paper.

Minor Essential Revisions
- The Background starts with a full paragraph on coronary artery disease (CAD) and this theme continues throughout the entire section. This seems an odd contextualization for the study considering that its focus is depression within a non-CAD sample.
- Better definition and explanation of the construct Sense of Coherence is warranted, and its relevance to R/S should also be explored.
- The authors suggest in the first paragraph of their Discussion that SOC may mediate the relationship between R/S and depression. The authors should test this possibility in their present data using a mediation model so they can comment more conclusively about their conjecture regarding the variables under study.
- Awkward language/phrasing should be changed throughout the manuscript to improve readability and clarity - e.g. "recent research addressed" (pg. 2, line 27 - should be "has addressed"), "strengthen further" (pg. 10, line 220), "depression presence" (pg. 20, line 223) and elsewhere.
- Greater coverage about the specific cultural factors inherent in the sample under study warrant description in the Background and Discussion sections.

Discretionary Revisions
- Given the devoutly religious nature of the sample, the authors should consider that their findings from the regression analyses do not suggest that R/S buffers against depression, but rather the absence of R/S is a risk factor for depression. This could be assessed by examining mean levels of depression among...
participants high vs. low R/S participants (e.g., top vs. bottom quartile) via ANOVA, to see if the former display clinical levels of depression.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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.