Author’s response to reviews

Title: The association between electrodermal activity (EDA), depression and suicidal behaviour: A systematic review and narrative synthesis

Authors:

Marco Sarchiapone (marco.sarchiapone@me.com)
Carla Gramaglia (carla.gramaglia@gmail.com)
Miriam Iosue (miriam.iosue@gmail.com)
Vladimir Carli (vladimir.carli@ki.se)
Laura Mandelli (laura.mandelli@unibo.it)
Alessandro Serretti (alessandro.serretti@unibo.it)
Debora Marangon (deboramarangon@libero.it)
Patrizia Zeppegno (patrizia.zeppegno@med.uniupo.it)

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Reviewer reports:

Johan Siqveland, Psy.D (Reviewer 1): I think the authors have made a significant job in improving the manuscript according to my previous comments, particularly in organizing the tables to a more reader friendly format.

Thank you

However I still think some more changes are needed before publication.

Minor comments

1. p 4 l 20 is the accurate prediction of suicide possible, or even desirable? Maybe moderate

Thank you for noticing this unfortunate choice of wording. We perfectly agree with you. We have deleted the word “accurate”, also to avoid repetition.
2. The authors write "several studies, most with. I think this is too vague; the exact number of studies should be described and the range of NOS score reported. I believe that the manuscript would be greatly improved if this formula of reporting the exact number rather than "several many, some, other" etc. is consistently used throughout the results section.

We amended as suggested.

3. I would suggest to include a summarizing statement for each of the sections (each main comparison) in the results section. This statement could for instance be presented at the end of each section in the results section of be the start of the discussion section.

Since in the discussion there is already a brief summary of the main findings, we have added a short sentence at the end of each section of the results.

4. difficult to understand this sentence, please elaborate.

We elaborated the sentence. We hope it is clearer now.

5. The results of antidepressant medication on EDA are not presented, merely the studies performed. This is demanding to present as there are many different drugs involved. Alternatively the authors may wish to take out these analysis of the review.

We have added a short paragraph about the main results. Table 1 should be consulted for more details.

6. Some of the text on suicidal behaviour and EDA presented at the start in the results section belongs in the introduction.

We believe that you mean “at the start at the discussion section”? We have moved the sentences that were most suitable for the introduction that the discussion.

7. The concept "suicide threateners" is unfamiliar and also stigmatizing. Please support the use of this phrase of find a more neutral one.

The paper uses the phrase “suicide threateners”; maybe this can be explained by the fact that it is quite old (1969). We replaced with a more detailed explanation offered by the authors themselves: patients recently admitted to the hospital because of suicide threats or preoccupations, but with no history of attempts.

8. what is a "good discriminator" please specify in more precise terms.
We removed the last part of the sentence, including the phrase “good discriminator”, since it added nothing to what described by the first half of the sentence.

9. p 1613 "determining" replace with review or assess?

Replaced with “assessing”.

General comment:

- The introduction and results section are well written

Thank you

- I still think the language is too vague, particularly in reporting the results, see minor comment # 2 above for way to improve.

Bushra Nasir, B.Sc, M.Sc, Ph.D (Reviewer 2): It is difficult to identify what updates have been made from the previous version, without a tracked changed document version. The manuscript is more readable, but my main concern is it still cannot be classified as a narrative synthesis, and is more a narrative review. As the authors have identified themselves, the nature of the papers included is highly varied, and it is difficult to present the outcomes in a systematic method. Given this, my recommendation would be to present the findings as a narrative review.

Sorry that it was difficult to identify the updates, which were so many that a tracked revision version was really hard to read. Regarding the concern about identifying the paper as a narrative synthesis or a narrative review, we are uncertain about how to handle it. Reviewer 1 does not comment any more about that. We would be grateful to receive a recommendation from the Editor about that. We have no problem to describe the paper as “narrative review”, the NOS scores and the PRISMA are more typical of a narrative synthesis…How shall we proceed in order to avoid disappointing any of the two reviewers? Thank you for your help.