Reviewer's report

Title: Correlates of depressive symptoms in late middle-aged Taiwanese women: Findings from the 2009 Taiwan National Health Interview Survey

Version: 1 Date: 18 Jun 2016

Reviewer: Thomas von Lengerke

Reviewer's report:

This paper utilizes cross-sectional data from the 2009 Taiwan National Health Interview Survey to assess associations of diabetes and depressive symptoms in postmenopausal women. It finds that, in multiple logistic regression, diabetes was associated with depressive symptoms, defined as a score of 10+ on the Chinese version of the CES-D 10 (OR 2.94). Besides, sedentary lifestyle and living alone were associated with this outcome as well, with even higher OR than diabetes (5.55 and 6.10, respectively). The authors conclude that these findings lend support to the association of depressive symptoms and diabetes in postmenopausal women, and that clinicians should be vigilant for the presence of depressive symptoms as a comorbid condition, and provide treatment to minimize its adverse consequences. In general, the paper is solid, and the response rate of the survey (84%) above-average. At the same time, the findings are not exceedingly surprising, given abundant research on the positive associations of diabetes, physical inactivity, and social isolation with depressive symptoms. This said, I recommend the following revisions:

Essential revisions
- The major drawback that the rationale for the analysis is not well enough stated. That is, the authors should provide convincing arguments that their analysis adds to the knowledge base regarding the associations of diabetes, physical inactivity, and social isolation with depressive symptoms.
- The authors could increase the merit of their analysis if they would look at physical activity and living with a partner as factors buffering the impact of diabetes on depressive symptoms. Thus, I recommend to add appropriate stratified analyses and/or interaction terms into the analytic scheme.
- The authors should state whether "diabetes" is to denote "type 2 diabetes" in their paper, and if not, how many had type 1 diabetes, how this distinction was assessed, and if there are different results.

Minor issues
- Page 4, lines 13-18: … that increased age, female sex, and being separated or divorced in terms of marital status are …
- The dichotomization of BMI as "underweight or normal weight" vs. "preobese or obese" is rather crude. The authors should state whether, on the one hand, omitting underweight respondents and, on the other hand, distinguishing preobese (25-29.9) vs. obese (30+) affects their results.
- The regression analysis underlying table 2 is multiple (more than one regressor), not multivariate (which would be more than one regressand).
Of course, the abstract should be amended in accordance with the above revisions.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organization that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal