

Author's response to reviews

Title:Female suicides: Psychosocial and psychiatric characteristics identified by a psychological autopsy study in Japan

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Author's response to reviews: see over

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Professor Nawsheen Boodhun
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Dear Dr. Boodhun:

We greatly appreciate the editor comments, as they helped to improve the quality of our manuscript. Below is each comment listed in bold, followed by our replies to each in italics.

1. Please describe the potential population from which the sample was drawn. This includes a clear account of how many women and men committed suicide in the study area during the study period.

We added the following sentences to the Methods (lines 152-158): "The 92 cases were reported from various areas of Japan including: Hokkaido and Tohoku (n=12;13.0%), Kanto-Shinetsu (n=40; 43.5%), Tokai-Hokuriku and Kinki (n=24; 26.1%), Chugoku and Shikoku (n=8; 8.7%), and Kyushu and Okinawa (n=8; 8.7%). The annual rates of female and male suicide deaths remained at approximately 30% and 70% respectively from 2007 to 2013 [20]. No significant regional differences were observed for these rates [20]."

2. Please describe the differences between families who do or do not seek assistance from the support service.

Data are not available. Please refer to our response to comment #3.

3. If these data are not available then this constitutes a significant limitation to the study as representative adequacy cannot be described. This need to be acknowledged and its implications for study findings discussed.

As suggested, we added the following sentences to the limitations (lines 391-394): "Those who did not contact the Mental Health Welfare Centers were not included in the study at all. We did not know if bereaved families who sought help were significantly different from those who did not."

We sincerely hope that the manuscript is suitable for publication. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you very much for your consideration. We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

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