Reviewer's report

Title: Increased number of somatic pain sites is associated with poor mental health in 18,104 adolescents: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 31 July 2012

Reviewer: Kazuhito Yokoyama

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
1. The term “poor mental health” is unclear. The authors should define it clearly.
2. It is likely that subjects with increased number of complaints or subjective symptoms, i.e. high GHQ scores, report somatic pains more. Similarly, such person may report low perceived academic achievements. The authors must convince readers that increased number of somatic pain predict some pathological conditions in terms of psychology or psychiatry.
3. Methods- How did the authors select 45 junior high schools and 28 high schools? How many schools in Tsu-city and Kochi Prefecture? Information on the nature of subjects is not sufficient. Also, explanation of survey procedure, including measures (questionnaires), is hard to understand.
4. Methods-Explanation of the statistical analysis is unclear. Describe the methods precisely.
5. The manuscript is too lengthy; it should be more concise. English grammar should be revised.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. Results- Do not repeat the values in Tables and text.
2. Discussion-Subheadings are unnecessary.

Discretionary Revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.