Reviewer's report

Title: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and productivity of schizophrenia trials: an ecological study.

Version: Date: 18 October 2003

Reviewer: Toshiaki A Furukawa

General
The study examined correlation between the number of trials for schizophrenia per country and some vital national statistics. Although the paper itself appears simple, this is based on a tremendous amount of time, money, effort and all put into building the schizophrenia trials database, and only this group can publish anything meaningful on this topic. And the results are interesting and illuminating.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
1) You perhaps do not need Appendix 1, which can be found in any statistics textbook.
2) As you acknowledge in the Discussion, the correlation between the number of trials between 1950-2000 and GDP in 1997, may not be fair. This applies particularly to those countries which developed rapidly post-WW II, such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China (and perhaps Germany). And these countries are represented in the bottom half of your Table 3. It would be best if you could examine correlations for GDP in, say, 1960. Failing this, you might want to discuss this possibility in your Discussion.

Minor Compulsory Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
1) In the Discussion section where you discuss the study's limitations, you should discuss the possibility that the first author's country may not represent the actual country where the trial took place or was funded. You should also discuss the proportion of international trials where the first author cannot, strictly speaking, represent the country of origin. If I am misunderstanding how you defined "country of origin" then this comment does not apply. However, reading your description of how you defined "country of origin" my interpretation appears correct and, in this case, you should perhaps describe how you defined "country of origin" in more details.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
None.

What next?: Accept after minor compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I have received fees for speaking from several pharmaceutical companies, some of which
manufacture and/or market various antipsychotics including olanzapine, quetiapine, risperidone and haloperidol.