Reviewer's report

**Title:** Changes in regional variations in the leading suicide method in Taiwan: a surge in charcoal-burning deaths from 2002 to 2008

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 24 March 2010

**Reviewer:** Neil RM Jayasinghe

**Reviewer's report:**

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

The paper is trying to address an interesting and important issue however, needs significant improvement.

**Background**

It was too brief, not balanced and not well written.

“Research has also suggested the existence of gender differences in the most prevalent suicide method across European countries” Not clear

There are several types of pesticide can be used to commit suicide and in this paper there is no enough information on Pesticide and we don’t know what types of pesticides are used in Taiwan.

Again needs more details on Charcoal burning in Taiwan.

The Percentage of suicide methods were not given therefore we don’t know what proportion in Asia or Latin America chooses pesticide to commit suicide.

There is no information on socio-cultural acceptability in Taiwan.

Unfortunately, the questions posed by the authors were not well defined either.

**Method**

It is not clear to me if methods were well described.

There are no information on population and we don’t know what the population in 7 cities and the 15 counties and how it varies according the regions.

We don’t know which cities or counties are belongs to urban, rural or mixed.

**Results;**

The findings are not clearly presented and not sure if the results were convincing.

Table 1 - It would be interesting to see the break down of suicide methods according the population and city/county.

Table 2 & 3 – It would be interesting to see if these two tables were merged together against the population and present as a Chart then we will be able to see a clear gender differences according to the age and methods. I will also apply some statistical test to check the differences.
Then we wouldn’t need Table 4

Discussion and Conclusion;
Not so sure the discussion and conclusion were balanced and adequately supported by the data. This is because it is not well presented, and obviously not convincing. This section needs major revisions.

“Our findings again support the hypothesis that the choice of suicide method depends on the socio-cultural acceptability of the method and its availability” Where?

No recommendation, No preventive methods were given.

And also, the grammar and wording have to be done again. Therefore, I suggest it requires compulsory revisions.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

NO
NO
NO
NO
NO

I declare that I have no competing interests.