Reviewer's report

Title: Body art practices and health risks: Awareness of the youths in the province of Naples, Italy

Version: 2 Date: 9 June 2011

Reviewer: Sharon Cahill

Reviewer's report:

NO Major Compulsory Revisions Required

Minor Essential Revisions

Page 3 - the introduction requires some clarifications on where some of the studies were carried out and why e.g. Mayer et al (2002 & 2008); Roberts and Ryans and Schorzman et al. Page 4 and 5 - it would be helpful for the reader to understand HOW this piece of research is qualitatively different to the other recent Italian research cited - in essence WHAT new knowledge does it add (baring in mind the serious limitations discussed below). Some indication of whether tattoo and piercing facilities are generally licenced and under what policies they are supposed to operate in Italy. What is the percentage of unlicenced facilities? How would these young people access these facilities? Could the authors also state what the six types of Italian Schools there are. If the age and gender is taken into consideration for first piercing(12.9 for females SD +/- 2.5) this would not mean most of the females were pierced as toddlers as cited by the authors. This also leads into the question around non-licenced facilities - if young girls have their ear lobes routinely pierced then perhaps they are pierced at home - this would confound the finding that only a small percentage access licenced facilities. There are quite serious limitations - the earlobe piercing for example and the 100% completion rate that renders the study substantially flawed - this is discussed in the limitations but fairly superficially. I am not sure how novel or relevant the comparision is between the two groups if the earlobe piercing / mistake is taken into consideration. These papers might prove useful


The flow of the paper is also disturbed by some language problems - I would hope that the authors would seek some assistance with translation / editing.

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

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'