Author's response to reviews

Title: Application of the COOP/WONCA charts for aged patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in comparison between Japanese and Chinese populations

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Thank you for your consideration of our manuscript for publication in your journal.

We have reviewed the above manuscript according to your reviewer’s comments.

Reviewer 2 (Dr. Makino)

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISE
1. The purpose of this study is unclear.
You should add it in your abstract. (Background)

I think you have two purposes.
For example
1) To verify the reliability and validity of the Japanese version of the COOP/WONCA charts.
2) To examine the qualitative differences of health status between Japanese and Chinese patients with COPD aged 50-79 years compared with those of healthy subjects.

We added the sentence below in Abstract (Background) section on Page 2: “The purposes of this study are to verify the reliability and validity of the Japanese version of the COOP/WONCA charts, which is tool for the measurement of health status, and to examine the qualitative differences of health status between Japanese and Chinese patients with COPD compared with those of healthy subjects.” and also added in Conclusion section on Page 12: “The Japanese and Chinese versions of the COOP/WONCA charts showed good reliability and validity for measuring health status and for comparing healthy subjects and patients with COPD in Japanese and Chinese populations.”
2. You should explain why you choose six cities.
Beijing and Shanghai are big cities. It is suitable for these cities to be representatives of China.
On the contrary, you choose Ulanhot (Inner Mongolia) as one of the representatives of China.
(Ulanhot is not a big city compared with Beijing and Shanghai)
Three cities in Japan are not big cities and may not be appropriate as a representative sample in Japan.
It might be difficult to compare three cities in China with three cities in Japan which are not big cities.

Indeed three Japanese cities are not big city like Tokyo or Osaka, but Kumamoto city, one of 20 cities designated by government ordinance in Japan, is relatively large. Shimonoseki city is one of 41 Core cities and lies adjacent to Kitakyushu city, which is also one of the designated cities. Goto city (it is small city) is rural area. But the differences among the cities belong to the same country is much smaller than those between the countries, especially in Japan and China because of their distinct political system, socioeconomic status, and so on. Additionally, Japan is more homogenized society due to its geographical narrowness in comparison to China (it is approximately 25 times larger than Japan). We believe that we can discuss the data obtained from these three cities in Japan as well as three cities in China because our purpose is NOT to define the national standard value but just to compare the data from Chinese three cities and Japanese three cities.

3. What kinds of countermeasures are necessary to prevent people from suffering from COPD?
You should explain them to some extent.

Our main subject was not to find the way to prevent COPD but to figure out the health status of the patient with COPD aged 50-79. However, we wrote them briefly in Discussion section on Page 12: “…the use of heating and cooking equipment indoor that do not produce smoke and avoidance of cigarette smoking may improve physical and social activity and psychological levels as well as medical treatment including pain control.” We think it was enough for us, considering our central theme.