Reviewer's report

Title: Psychometric properties of the Iranian version of 12-item Short Form Health Survey (SF-12): A population-based study

Version: 1 Date: 11 June 2009

Reviewer: Lynette L-Y Lim

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revisions

Abstract, Results, 3rd sentence: PCS and MCS should be PCS12 and MCS12

Methods, Translation, last sentence: The actual method used to produce the PCS12 & MCS12 scores should be described.

Discussion, para 2: In the Introduction, the authors stated that the SF-12 was developed for use in large health studies. Questionnaires in such studies are often self-administered. In their Discussion, the authors should stress as a limitation that their findings might not hold when the instrument is used in a self-administered mode. Some self-administered applications of the SF-12 have found very high incompletion rates (eg Lim L & Fisher J, Qual Life Res (1999); 8:1-8.)

Discussion, para 1, 2nd sentence: The authors should clarify exactly how their results have shown that the SF-12 can be used for cross-cultural quality of life comparisons.

Discussion, para 3, 3rd sentence: The statement “No floor or ceiling effects were observed…” conflicts with the results in Table 2 reporting significant ceiling effects for 5 scales and floor effects for RP and RE.

Discussion, para 4, 6th sentence: The authors reported that vitality has been found in other studies to correlate higher with PCS than MCS. They should follow up this observation with its relevance for the Iranian setting.

Conclusion, 2nd sentence: “… would minimize problems with multiple health-related quality of life scales” – the authors need to clarify what problems are being minimized.

General: There are several typos throughout the text that should be corrected

Table 3: The abbreviations PF, PF1, PF2 etc are very cryptic. Sufficient information should be provided to enable readers unfamiliar with the SF-12 & SF-36 to understand this table.

Table 3, footnote: Please give justifications for the correlations classified as
strong, moderate and weak

Table 5: The p-values should be from a trend test instead of the non-specific test from a one-way ANOVA

Discretionary revisions

Abstract, Results, last sentence: The statement “… strong correlations were observed…” is rather vague. The authors could give a more precise statement of their findings.

Methods, The questionnaire: It would help readers unfamiliar with the SF-12 & SF-36 to have the statements and responses of the 12 items spelt out.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests