Reviewer's report

Title: The Chronic Pain Coping Inventory: validation of the French version and second-order confirmatory factor analysis

Version: 1 Date: 17 September 2005

Reviewer: Gabriel Tan

Reviewer's report:

General
This is a well written manuscript and appears to be a solid study overall. This paper adds to the overall understanding of coping with chronic pain.

------------------------------

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
To improve the manuscript, I would suggest the authors include and integrate the findings from another relevant study which has been inadvertently left out of this manuscript: Tan G, Nguyen Q, Anderson KO, Jensen MP, and Thornby J. (2005). Further validation of the chronic pain coping inventory, JOP, 6(1), 29-40. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to examine the factor structure of the CPCI in that study. The findings supported an 8-factor model and the predictive validity of the CPCI scales, at least for a veterans population.

A second comment has to do with the authors' use of multiple CFA's instead of an initial omnibus CFA for all the items apparently due to inadequate sample size. The reason to use a CFA was to test a previously hypothesized model on a particular sample. However, by conducting CFA's in the individual scales, it did not seem to me that the authors were testing the overall structure of the instrument. Please address this issue.

------------------------------

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

In the Method section, when describing the Quebec sample, the authors used the inclusion criteria of "a first or new episode of low back pain..." It would help to more clearly define 'episode'; e.g., would a subject with continuous back pain, intermittent or multiple pain other than back pain not be included? In the exclusion criteria, it is not clear to me why pregnancy, back surgery, and severe spinal pathology are used as exclusion criteria. How are these factors related to coping?

What is the implication when there was about an equal number of subjects (457) refusing and agreeing (439) to participate in this study? Also, this sample appears to represent people of very low income (average income between $10,000 and $30,000). What is the implication the low income on coping?

I would suggest that the authors send the manuscript out for English proof reading as many of the words were used in a manner not consistent with their usage. E.g., under "French sample", subjects were "met", perhaps the authors meant "recruited"; similarly, the "vocation" of this unit ...is to treat chronic pain, do the authors meant the "goal" or "purpose". What is "rachialgia"? 9in the same paragraph.
Similarly, when using abbreviation for the first time, the authors should spell out the words. E.g., SPSS and EQS in the Result section.
Table 1 is too confusing to read. It may be better to separate it into two tables.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare I have no competing interest