Reviewer's report

Title: Relationships between self-rated oral health, subjective symptoms, oral health behavior and clinical conditions in Japanese university students: A cross-sectional survey at Okayama University

Version: 1 Date: 14 August 2013

Reviewer: Jonathan Broadbent

Reviewer's report:

General comments:

Avoid the use of the word 'subjects', this is outdated terminology. See Chalmers (1999), BMJ http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1115535/

Methods:

Which version of the WHO protocols were used? This isn't referenced.

It is normal to report the participation rate at the start of the results section, not in the methods. In the methods section the description of the sample should be limited to a description of the characteristics of the base population and inclusion/exclusion criteria that were used.

Were those aged 20 excluded from examinations, or were data collected for this group? This section is confusing. Were 232 20-year-old students excluded, or were "n=120" excluded? It looks like the authors meant 112 with incomplete data and = 120 20-year-olds, but this is not clear on first reading.

The authors have made extensive use of SEM modeling, and this is fine; however, the Table data are not very well formatted, and could be presented in a much more informative way. It would be informative to compare sociodemographic characteristics by self-care and the major outcome measures.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests