Reviewer's report

Title: An examination of the health and wellbeing of childless women: A cross-sectional exploratory study in Victoria, Australia

Version: 1 Date: 2 September 2011

Reviewer: Echo Chang

Reviewer's report:

The research question posed by the authors is well defined, but the methods are not appropriate to shed light in the questions asked.

Problem area that require major revisions:
• Convenience sample is not representative
• Sample size is too small to draw meaningful conclusion
• T-test can only shows differences of two groups, but not the cause of the difference. To achieve that, one needs at least multiple regression to isolate the effect of childlessness on the dependent variables.

However, I don’t see how this can be fixed with the small sample of this study.

Other minor essential revisions:
• The definition of key variables is missed in the methods.
• The discussion and conclusions are not supported by the data. Due to the small sample size, the appropriate statistical tool is not applicable to do appropriate analysis, thus the conclusion is not supported.
• The authors touched the limitation in sampling and the problem of drawing causation from the cross-sectional study. In that case, the conclusion that “Childless women may be at a greater risk of experiencing poor physical health” is unfounded.
• A relevant issue: the abstract does not accurately convey what has been found---The t-test results can only be inferred as an existence of correlation, not causation.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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