Reviewer’s report

Title: The decision-making process for the fate of frozen embryos by Japanese infertile women: a qualitative study

Version: 3 Date: 6 October 2011

Reviewer: Masae Kato

Reviewer’s report:

Comments to the author

The manuscript ‘The decision-making process for the fate of frozen embryos by Japanese infertile women: a qualitative study’.

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

This manuscript improved since the previous version by incorporating more works from other scholars and more clarification for research methods. However, it still leaves some crucial points to be worked on and let me address these points in what follows.

1) Background
It is possible to see that authors made an effort to integrate reviewers’ comments and recommendation regarding pre-existing works from other scholars. But because of that, it seems that the background has now become somewhat messy. Please read it once again and make it succinct and to the point, trying to situate the present work among other scholars’ works. Your introduction of other scholars’ work is to guide readers to understand the importance and novelty of your work among others.

2) The concept of ‘Mottainai embryos’
There are still at least two points to be improved about this concept. To begin with, the authors repeats the term ‘Mottainai embryo’ right from the beginning of the article, but many readers cannot know what it precisely means or how it is so unique to the samples the authors observed. It needs some explanation earlier in the article.

Second, it is not clear yet how specific, or how Japanese Mottainai mentality is. The feeling of apology to the workers or producers’ efforts exists elsewhere in the world, too. If it does not exist elsewhere in the world, please insert some references and please convince us. (like in your response to reviewers’ comments, you are citing some webaddress).

Also, the authors need to show us at least one comparison --- may it be a quotation of one sentence from other scholars’ work --- between cases of Japan (Mottainai) and case of an example from other culture which is clearly different.
from, or lacking in the mentality of Mottainai, in order to tell us more concretely what Mottainai is.

I do personally think that this feeling is familiar in many other cultures, too. An important point is what is priority in decision-making and how the priority is made in different socio-cultural settings --- in some cultures, husbands’ voices are determining factor than Mottainai sense of feeling, in other societies, price of preservation might be more dominant factor. If Mottainai is so important in Japan, I would like to know why.

3) Religion
In my research, I found that religious background played a relevant role in decision-making (2009). The authors did not ask interviewees about religion, does it mean that authors did not really take the factor into account? If we ask, ‘...and did your belief influence your decision?’ they might eloquently talk about their belief. At least it was my case. Mizuko-kuyo is done by atheists, too, just like many atheists join Matsuri (##) while they are not religious. So, I am afraid that their doing Kuyo is not really a convincing sign of their being religious. I would suggest not to draw a conclusion that religions did not play a role in decision-making, because this is not yet known in the present research. So, I would not mention about religion in this article.

It might be still a lot of work, but I hope that authors manage to make a good work, and I anticipate the final work.

Sincerely,
The reviewer.

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

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

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