Reviewer’s report

Title: Factors associated with the prevalence of back pain and work absence in shipyard workers

Version: 2 Date: 17 Nov 2017

Reviewer: Kay Cooper

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for addressing the previous comments.

There are still some outstanding points:

Previous Point 3: The statement about global burden of disease has been included but seems to be a bit out of place where it has been put. It is not clear what "its" refers to. Are you saying that the GBD study demonstrated as association between manufacturing and back pain? Would a discussion of the back pain literature not be better in the next paragraph where you actually discuss back pain in shipyard workers? I would suggest that the background needs some revision rather than just inserting a single sentence.

Also - the point about medical examinations - you still refer to them in the purpose but they are not mentioned in the rest of the manuscript. I still don't understand if they were part of the study or not. Who conducted them? What was done in them? Was the data they generated used in the study or not? Only the survey data appears to be reported so I remain a bit confused as to the role of the medical examinations.

Previous point 5: I think you still misunderstand my point - I will try to clarify. Using either word ("effect" or "impact") suggests that this study has explored cause and effect. But you cannot do this with a cross-sectional study due to all the other (perhaps unknown) confounding factors. All you can state is that you have demonstrated a relationship or association between variables.

Are the methods appropriate and well described? 
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls? 
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown? 
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.
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If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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