Reviewer's report

Title: Association among oral symptoms, oral health-related quality of life, and health-related quality of life in a sample of adults living with HIV/AIDS in Malaysia

Version: 1 Date: 09 Dec 2016

Reviewer: Bethy Turton

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper which has the potential to be quite interesting. Before considering the feedback on a point-by-point basis, it is worth noting that the PDF proof was very difficult to read because of the presence of track changes. It is this reviewer's preference to review papers with only the changes identified by manually changing the color in the font. It was very challenging to read and review this paper and is hoped that the authors consider a more favorable format for presenting their revisions in the future. One other small point is that there are 2 or 3 places in the manuscript where the grammar is not correct. (Page 2, line 19 - Additionally, a structured self-administered questionnaire was used to assess characteristics of individuals and environment, biological function and symptoms reported)

Overall, the authors have addressed the major concerns raised previously. However, there are some remaining points that would be useful to address particularly with regards to the flow of central ideas throughout the paper.

The key idea of the paper seems to be to build evidence around the modified Wilson and Cleary model and it is good that the authors tried to use this idea as a common theme throughout the paper. There are some discrepancies with the discussion of the model when the author states "our study also demonstrated the influence of biological function, symptoms, general health perceptions, individual characteristics and environmental characteristics on HRQOL". It would be good if this could be clarified in order to make a strong case for the key theme of the paper. In particular, it is hard to find evidence in the data presented for the relationship between 'general health perceptions' and HRQoL. What variables are the authors referring to when they talk about general health perceptions? Perhaps data from the old Table 3 could be presented in the text of results to support this statement and also the comparison of perceived oral health in this sample compared with the general Malaysian sample (pg 28, Line 8-17).

Following on from this flow of ideas around the Wilson and Cleary model; this reviewer's previous request to tie the sociodemographic characteristics with OHRQoL and HRQoL through presentation of bivariate analysis prior to multivariate modelling was only partly addressed. More thorough exploration of this facet of the model would be useful in tying together the key theme of the paper. That is to say; relate Sociodemographic characteristics and environmental characteristics to OHRQoL (not just income as is presented in Table 5) then that flows through the model that OHRQoL is related to HRQoL and finally HAART.
It was good that the authors provided a better explanation for the multivariate model that is presented; it would be useful to include goodness-of-fit statistics.

There is some deviation of discussion away from the key theme. This is particularly noted in the conclusion where the authors state "There should be a mechanism that can facilitate and encourage communication and referral between medical and dental practitioners to ensure delivery of holistic care to patients. Periodic referral of HIV-patients for dental check-up, which is not currently a routine practice at public health care facilities in Malaysia, is highly recommended." This point relates to delivery of health services rather than demonstration of the key model in the paper. If this point is to be presented at all, then it should be in the discussion rather than putting a new idea into the conclusion.

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

Yes

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

Yes

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Yes

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