Reviewer’s report

Title: Illness beliefs among patients with chronic widespread pain - associations with self-reported health-status, anxiety and depressive symptoms and impact of pain

Version: 1 Date: 02 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Sara Edmond

Reviewer's report:

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Overall, the authors were quite responsive to my initial reviewer comments, and as such, I feel the manuscript has improved significantly. Some additional changes for the author's considerations:

I appreciate the changes to the hypothesis and aim. The sentence "A further aim was to analyze associations between illness beliefs, anxiety- and depressive symptoms, impact of pain and health status" could still be clearer by specifying which variables were outcomes of interest (e.g., mental and physical health from the SF-36).

I asked about the Manchester definition of pain because it seems odd that you would report this information but not look for differences between those who met the criteria via your survey versus those who did not. Did you consider controlling for this in your analyses?

Listing bodily pain alongside PCS and MCS in Table 4, along with the wording of your aims, led me to believe you would also conduct a regression analysis predicting BP, however, this analysis is not reported. Please consider revising your aims and table 4 so that bodily pain does not appear to be a potential outcome.

The authors chose not to examine demographic variables as they relate to illness beliefs or their outcomes (PCS and MCS), and stated they did not intend to conduct a subgroup analyses. While I appreciate that they do not wish to conduct subgroup analyses, it is common practice to control for demographic variables in regression analyses examining psychosocial variables, as we know many of these scales have known demographic differences (e.g., lower socioeconomic status is related to poorer health). Without even considering controlling for any demographic factors, it is difficult to know if the results could be explained by demographic differences or if a true effect exists.

Including all predictors entered into the regression models in Table 5, rather than only the predictors that remained significant in the model, would improve the clarity of the results.
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.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
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

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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