Reviewer's report

Title: Cytokine gene polymorphisms and serum cytokine levels in patients with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis

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Reviewer: Mridula Bose

Reviewer's report:

The presented manuscript by Alhamad et al., aims to investigate the effect of cytokine gene polymorphism in IPF.

The manuscript has several weaknesses and in my opinion is not suitable for publication in the present form in this journal.

Major comments:
1. The power of study with such sample size would negate the detection of any effect of the variants, if any on the population.
2. Why the given polymorphisms were chosen is not clear. These are some of the SNPs commonly looked for. Except for this reason no other explanation is provided.
3. The manuscript doesn't describe in methods whether proper genetic analysis was done such as checking for HWE, Minor allele frequency. Also, no check for population stratification was included.
4. The research question and the results are not presented in a lucid manner and the conclusion is also not very clear.
5. There have been studies on serum IL-6 levels and IPF. It is not clear what additional information the presented study adds to the field.
6. Authors could have checked for correlation between the different genotypes and serum cytokine levels between groups. That would have added to some value to the manuscript.
7. The number of samples is too small for any statistical validation.

The conclusions drawn are not tenable. The manuscript should be rewritten focusing on the cytokine levels of the patients from the specific region and its possible impact on the management of such patients. The polymorphism of the selected sequences are too general and non specific to add any value to either the manuscript or for the local population under study.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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 interest.