Reviewer's report

Title: Priorities for Research in Child Maltreatment, Intimate Partner Violence and Resilience to Violence Exposures: Results of an International Delphi Consensus Development Process

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Reviewer: Sarah McIntyre

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review Priorities for Research in Child Maltreatment, Intimate Partner Violence and Resilience to Violence Exposures: Results of an International Delphi Consensus Development Process.

I commend this group for the development of their network PreVAiL and undertaking the process of developing consensus priorities for research in this very important area. I do not work in this area, but have undertaken a Delphi process to develop research priorities in another field. So, I will limit my comments to methodology.

Discretionary revisions:

Methods

1. “Procedures 3” There seems to be limited input from consumers despite the presence of obviously outstanding academics. There were priorities developed by Family Violence Initiative representatives, however there were only 20 questions going into round 1 and this included questions developed through reviews of the literature and meetings of the PreVAiL members. Why were these groups not included as participants in the study? Are there any plans to invite further participation from consumers?

2. Survey Round 2. Why did the participants not rate Round 2 on the 1-7 scale? The reason I mention is that a number of new questions were bought in for round 2, yet it seems that they were not rated for their importance, only ranked.

3. Discussion Round 3. One of the benefits of using a Delphi technique is that strong personalities do not dominate, and that a consensus can be developed without peer pressure. Are the authors able to state the methods used during the discussion round to ensure that this was the case during discussions as well? Are they confident that there was a consensus for the changes that were made (in particular those questions dropped and re-ordered)?

Results

1. How was the ranking for each question decided on? (Were medians/means used?)

2. What proportions of “opt offs” were there. I.e were questions ranked by more than half of the participants?
3. The feasibility themes was a novel addition to the usual Delphi process for setting research priorities, and starts to deal with the essential next step – commencing the research.

This study is valid and coherent. The conclusions drawn are well balanced and are supported by the data. There are some methodological questions that I have, and if these are answered and included in the paper it will make it a stronger one. Congratulations, and I look forward to reading the research findings that follow from this process.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare I have no competing interests.