Reviewer's report


Version: 1 Date: 28 November 2006

Reviewer: Deb A Gust

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Background: In the last paragraph, it would help if the wording was explicit that the objectives of the study were twofold. The first objective was to assess parents’ attitudes towards hepatitis B vaccination for their child. The second objective was to determine if differences existed in response rates and in responses between parents who completed a paper questionnaire and parents who completed a web based questionnaire.

A table is not typically presented in the Background (Table 1).

Methods: It is not clear why logistic regression was used to determine differences in proportions. Usually logistic regression is used to determine a model of factors significantly associated with a dependent variable. Chi square is often used to determine differences in proportions between two groups. An explanation would be helpful.

Indicate if a reimbursement offered to potential participants.

Results: One of the objectives is to compare the paper and the web questionnaire, so a subheading indicating that comparison would be helpful (Comparison of paper versus web responses). In this section it would be useful to state that because demographic characteristics did not vary significantly, all responses were combined (Table 2).

It is not necessary to have a table for each of 3 important questions by demographic characteristics. The objective as stated is to assess parents’ knowledge of hepatitis B and their attitudes towards hepatitis B not to assess differences by demographic characteristics. If the study is purely descriptive then simply presenting the frequencies and proportion of the responses is sufficient. There is thus no reason for a final logistic regression model. If the authors want to make comparisons, it should be spelled out in the objectives or study question.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Abstract page 2 Method 1st line “were” should be “where”

Background page 3 2nd para line 5 “fare” should be “far”

Methods page 5 2nd para line 5 “and comprised 15” should be “was comprised of 15”

Results page 8 Under “Knowledge and attitudes” subheading bullets should be put into sentence format

Results page 8 3rd para line 2 Care should be taken to reference comparisons in terms of “a greater proportion of”.

Results page 9 para 2 line 6 “too” should be “to”

And others in the Discussion

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major
An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests