Reviewer’s report

Title: Misconduct in research: A descriptive survey of attitudes, perceptions and associated factors in a developing country

Version: 2 Date: 26 September 2013

Reviewer: BC Martinson

Reviewer’s report:

1) My original concerns remain about the nature of the sample employed (a convenience sample with extremely high prevalence of self-reported misconduct themselves), and about the limitations of reports of having observed others’ misbehaviors. Yet, I acknowledge that the authors are not in a position to correct or address these matters in this manuscript. Setting those concerns aside, the authors have been quite responsive to the full range of reviewer concerns that were expressed in the initial review. As a result, the updated manuscript is stronger, and more balanced with more explicit recognition of the limitations of the study and data being employed.

2) Additional pertinent literature review has been incorporated both in the introduction and discussion sections. I suggest the authors go a bit further in this regard, specifically adding some discussion of other studies that have reported on similar data using reports of the behavior of others as primary evidence. Work from a publication by Titus, Wells and Rhoades (Nature. 2008 June 19; 453(7198):980-2) presents an exemplary way of collecting such “report of others’ behaviors” and yielded figures against which to contrast the data in this manuscript. Much earlier work by Swazey, Seashore-Lewis and Anderson, which used a querying process more similar to that used in the present study could also be cited and contrasted with the current results. Specifically, consider the following publications:


3) In the first paragraph of the Background section, the authors enumerate the various mechanisms and structures that have been put in place in some developed countries to foster research integrity and minimize research misconduct. The introduction leaves the impression that these efforts are and have obviously been highly successful in attaining the desired outcomes in those countries, but this is misleading. We do not yet have good evidence for the efficacy or effectiveness of most such efforts. This should be explicitly noted in that paragraph.
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 that I have no competing interests.