Reviewer’s report

Title: Informatics Leadership Models in the Academic Clinical and Translational Research Enterprise

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Reviewer: Jesualdo Tomas F Fernandez-Breis

Reviewer’s report:

The authors do research in this paper on how organized and related IT and BMI are in different USA institutions. One of the goals seems to be to understand in which conditions clinical and translational research is currently taking place and to provide strategies for improving such research processes by adapting the organizations to the new challenges.

The authors have carried out a survey which had 31 respondents. The sample is then reduced which could be a reason for not drawing major conclusions. However, given that the target population can be considered to belong to a specific social, professional group, a small sample size might be useful for getting interesting data and interpretations. The results obtained are interesting since they permit a better understanding of the present organizational context. Besides, the paper is well-written and is easy to understand.

Major Compulsory Revisions

According to the authors, the aim of the paper is to describe a systematic survey and evaluation of such organizational and leadership models. I find clear that the paper is addressing organizational models, but I find weak the treatment of leadership models. This might be due to a difference in the understanding of leadership model. For example, the paper says, when discussing "enabling successful biomedical informatics leadership in the academic clinical and translational research enterprise", that "the results of the survey indicate that when there is a formal BMI academic unit in place, there is a distinct difference in the perceived access to both BMI and IT services and expertise as well as perceived coordination between BMI and IT leaders". I find this claim is more related to the organizational model than to how leadership is carried out. Hence, I think the authors should make more explicit which are their goals in terms of organizational and leadership models.

Regarding the questionnaire itself, I have noticed that the respondents were given the following options:

Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
Other (no answer, not available, etc.)

This means that they have two positive options, one neutral and one negative option. Why not including a very poor or removing the very good? This might cause distortion in the results, since the categories are unbalanced. Have you taken this into account?

In the discussion section, I also think that the authors should make more clear the relation of both "differentiating the role of CS, BI and IT in the research enterprise" and "informatics workforce development is a central and supporting endeavor in well-integrated environments" with the survey and the data of the paper. The users mention that they are using some qualitative responses provided to their survey instrument, but such responses are not available.

Minor Essential Revisions

It would be nice to know to how many different institutions the 31 respondents belong.

It would be also interesting to describe which institutions were used for the "thematic evaluation of exemplary organizational structures at major AHCs". I do not mean to provide a detailed list, but it is not clear if you have analyzed the institutions of the respondents or other ones. In such case, describing them or the selection criteria would be of interest for the readers.

**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