Reviewer's report

Title: Acceptance of the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist among surgical personnel in Hospitals in Guatemala City

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Reviewer: Andreas Böhmer

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Acceptance of the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist among surgical personnel in Hospitals in Guatemala City

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Reviewers’ comments:

As a reviewer I appreciate the authors approach to determine the acceptance of the surgical safety checklist in their country. It shows the worldwide awareness of the importance of safety-relevant aspects in operative medicine.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?

The authors present the results of a survey among surgical and anaesthesiology staff in three hospitals in Guatemala City. The study is aimed to determine staff’s knowledge and acceptance of a perioperative safety checklist one year after implementation.

The manuscript begins with a long passage about the historical background of the surgical safety campaign without relation to the presented survey. Only the last sentence refers to the staff member survey. The authors should add a description why personnels' acceptance and knowledge of surgical safety checklist is an important topic.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?

The authors describe the use of two questionnaires. The one questionnaire is described as a translation of Safety Attitude Questionnaire which was developed by the Centre for Health Care Safety and Quality on University of Texas. The origin of the other questionnaire is not described and remains unclear. A detailed description of the questionnaires and the presentation as appendices could be useful. It is not clear whether the participation was made anonymous or not. The authors should describe, how the pretesting of the questionnaire was made and which aspects (and what manner) questions were modified.

There is lack of information concerning the statistical analysis; e. g. authors should describe whether data are presented as absolute or relative means, standard deviations or percentiles.

3. Are the data sound?
The presentation of data is very short and seems to be incomplete: general characteristics of staff members (age) were presented as mean values without standard deviation. Results concerning the acceptance and beliefs of the benefit of using the safety checklist were presented only as positive answers, whereas the negative are not shown.

The authors present four subgroups (surgery residents, anaesthesiologists, anaesthesiology residents and nurses). One single subgroup (anaesthesiologists) consists of 6 members. The authors compare this subgroup with other subgroups which consist of 40 members or more.

Some data are not mentioned in the text but shown in table and vice versa. Authors should present all relevant data and focus on the Safety Attitude Questionnaire. Furthermore they should present the data for each group without comparing groups of different amount. Differences between groups should be mentioned in the limitations of the study.

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?

Some results which were not presented were discussed later on; e.g. difference between public and private hospital were just described for nurses but not for all groups. The authors should describe all data for each group separately.

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

The discussion is very short and not always supported by the data and key question. Furthermore the presented study is rarely discussed against the background of other studies.

Some conclusions are not consistent with the presented data: The authors describe that “more nurses than surgery residents knew the correct time for using the three parts of the checklist”. In the discussion it is said that “expect for nurses staff members did not know the checklist had to be used before the induction of the anaesthesia, before skin incision and before patient leaves the OR”. The authors should concatenate more directly their discussion results to the presented results and avoid to give some general statements.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?

In the presented manuscript no limitations of the study were discussed. The presented study has several limitations; e.g. number of members in the subgroup, use of questionnaire anonymously or not, way of checklist implementation etc. which should be described by the authors.

7. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?

Title accurately conveys the main topic of the presented study. Abstract is very short and less data are presented. The Background is the longest passage as well as in the manuscript itself. The authors should give more attention the results and discussion.
Minor Essential Revision

8. Is the writing acceptable?
Writing is acceptable, but citations are positioned after the end of the sentence.

**Level of interest:** 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:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests’