Reviewer’s report

Title: Hispanic Construction Worker Perspectives on Factors Impacting Worksite Safety and Risk: A qualitative investigation

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Reviewer: Jose L. L Meliá

Reviewer’s report:

1. Is the question posed original, important and well defined? The paper presents an exploratory qualitative research based on two focus groups of three two-hours consecutive sessions for 8 union workers and 12 non-union workers. Although very open, the qualitative research question posed by the authors is easily identifiable and understood. The paper addresses an important matter of the study within the context of its field.

The paper underlines an interpretation of Hispanic workers accident rates related to work conditions (instead of related to work characteristics) what is not new but contributes a clear and important conclusion.

2. Are the data sound and well controlled?

This kind of qualitative data are descriptive, interpretative, very local, and difficult to define as well controlled. The descriptive data provided, based on very few cases, probably provide a rich and useful qualitative picture of many Hispanic construction workers. However there is no evidence about the value of this local data as a general picture.

There is a tendency to speak of Hispanic workers as a group and may be in some context some Hispanic workers share some characteristics. However, the degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity in key safety or cultural variables within Hispanic workers is a matter of research. There are many Hispanic countries with huge cultural and economic differences. Do not assume that Hispanic workers are a single homogeneous population.

3. Is the interpretation (discussion and conclusion) well balanced and supported by the data?

Data and interpretation are fully qualitative. Perhaps conclusions drawn from the study may be valid but the nature of data suggests that these conclusions should be considered as a source of hypotheses for additional research.

4. Are the methods appropriate and well described, and are sufficient details provided to allow others to evaluate and/or replicate the work? The qualitative method is suitable for the study. It is reasonably described and reproducible by peers in the field. There is no quantitative data and any statistical analysis.

5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the methods? In my opinion these data are useful as a preliminary study in order to generate hypothesis for other
methodologies. Although comments of these few workers suggest important issues, there is no way to attribute these opinions and experiences external validity.

In order to assess the prevalence of these issues in a defined population, an additional phase developing a questionnaire and sampling Hispanic and non-Hispanic workers may be of help.

In order to assess the importance of work conditions and supervisor issues a sampling of construction worksites using other research techniques (e.g. direct observation) may be useful.

6. Can the writing, organization, tables and figures be improved?
Manuscript, although unusual by its qualitative nature, is well written and organized.

7. When revisions are requested.
Additional data, using other methodologies, need to be added to support the authors' conclusions.

8. Are there any ethical or competing interests issues you would like to raise?
The study adheres to ethical standards and is fair from an ethical point of view.

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

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I have any competing interest.