Reviewer's report

Title: Assessing the Quantity and Quality of Research about Obesity in Arab Countries

Version: 1 Date: 31 May 2014

Reviewer: Fikri Abu-Zidan

Reviewer's report:

Recommendation: Major revision
The topic is important. Nevertheless there are major limitations in the methodology of the study that have to be addressed before considering the paper for publication:

Major compulsory revisions
1. There is major sample bias in the study. This stemmed from using only SCI which is limited compared with PUBMED which has more journals mainly open access. The authors have to repeat the search using PUBMED and find the percentage of those SCI relative to MEDLINE. The paper below can help the authors in the methodology section. PUBMED is the most commonly used database.


2. The authors have to standardize the number of publications by the population and GDP. That is very important if the aim was to compare different countries (This approach was used in reference 43 of the paper).

3. The term obesity is very specific which definitely will cause major sample bias. The authors have to defend why they limited their search. They can use more general terms and then limit them if needed and not to start so specific. I doubt that they have missed many publications. They used a convenient approach which is not precise. PUBMED has an advantage over SCI because it may select similar terms in the search with different language differences.

4. The authors have to be focused in their papers and concentrate on Arab countries and not to mentioned details of other countries. This will significantly reduce the results section to almost 60 %.

5. There is no need for such extensive 45 references. Limit them to about 25. You have to select the best of them. That will make things much easier for the readers and reviewers.

In summary this paper needs major revision before considering it for publication.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely
related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

None declared