Reviewer’s report

Title: Global collaborative networks on meta-analyses of randomised trials published in high impact factor medical journals: a social network analysis

Version: 1

Date: 20 November 2013

Reviewer: Charles Wiysonge

Reviewer’s report:

Major comments (no revisions needed)

This paper positions its basis, process and inferences very clearly. It is of importance to the “Big Science” community and has a high interest level. Although the scope of this manuscript is definitely different from the recent paper by Uthman et al (PLoS ONE 8(10): e78517) that assessed the characteristics of the most frequently cited “systematic review and meta-analysis” related articles, the message is strikingly similar i.e. the USA, UK and Canada are “leaders” in the production of citation classics in evidence synthesis and (unfortunately) no first author from low or middle-income countries led one of the most cited papers. I can only hope, like the authors, that this analysis will be useful as policy makers, researchers and institutions look to the future.

Discretionary Revisions

I find it interesting that 12 highly cited papers from the named top general medical journals were not indexed in PubMed (“… 12 additional publications were added from complementary searches of reference lists…”). As a matter of interest, could the authors list these 12 papers in a web appendix (for example)? In the same vein, it is surprising to me that 41 (6%) citation classics in meta-analyses are single-authored! Could these papers be provided as well?

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