Reviewer’s report

Title: Knowledge, attitudes, and practices of Cameroonian physicians with regards to acute pain management in the emergency department: a multicenter cross-sectional study

Version: 0 Date: 10 Jul 2019

Reviewer: Corey B. Bills

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review this manuscript. In general the topic under study seems to be an important one and worthy of study, but the manuscript would benefit from significant changes as described below.

Title: Consider use of 'in' instead of 'at'

Abstract

Introduction: consider collapsing second and third sentence

Methods:

Unclear on use of the term 'analytic'

Please clarify the four month time period and the cross sectional nature of the study. Just to be clear it sounds like practitioners were surveyed once without follow-up it's just that the survey ran over a four month time period, correct?

Why was the decision made not to include EM or anesthesia faculty as a comparison group? Why do we presume that they know more than the group(s) under study?

Results:

Being a general practitioner was significantly associated with a poor level of knowledge. (p=0.02; OR=5.1). I'm not sure who the comparison group here is; is it interns?

Background

pg 3
line 30: "Its global prevalence is 20% [1,2]." Please clarify the context of this prevalence; is it chronic pain?

line: 38, change they to the

line 40-45: this sentence is unclear and need to be revised. I'm also not sure how relevant it is to the study itself.

The background would benefit from a larger understanding of why. For example, why is this such an important problem for Cameroon especially; how are patient's treated; what medications are available for pain control; what is the standard of care around pain treatment. Something that gives the reader a better understanding of how this problem is relevant to the context being explored would be helpful.

Methods

page 4

line 12: The use of the terms "analytic' should be removed. The term 'prospective' as it relates to the timing of a cross-sectional study is confusing. Please clarify.

line 27: Again I think the decision to exclude emergency medicine and anesthesia physicians is a limitation of the study, and rests on a significant bias that these physicians know more than the counterparts under study and should be addressed more thoroughly.

line 31-37: Combine 1st and 2nd sentences.

39-41, What was the scoring system used? I'm not sure the readers will understand how knowledge was studied. Is this from a previously validated 32-item test? Please provide more details.

line 44: No need to specify each of the descriptive variables used

line 53-60: Why the decision to use both Pearson and t tests in terms of making comparisons between two groups.

Results

page 5

line 14: Please specify standard deviation in the sentences including average
line 27: How do the terms poor and good relate to a numerical score in this case. I'm confused given the lack of description in the methods section.

line 44-49: Can you specify why these sentences are different? And why is there no test statistic in the first sentence?

page 6

line 7: Please clarify in the methods how attitudes and practices were assessed. I think this is all by self assessment, but it is not clarified and makes the reading of the results challenging.

line 39-50: These two sentences seem contradictory even though they are reporting similar information. Please clarify what a "good answer" is. Is this a correct answer as specified in the sentence prior?

Discussion

Overall, the discussion needs to be restructured. I would focus on the three most important findings from your study. Currently it reads as an extension of the results section rather than as a discussion of those results.

The comparison of your study subjects to other studies is less relevant to the actual aims of the paper so would remove the second paragraph.

In general you do not need to reiterate the results specifically.

You should move this sentence to the top "study is one of the first to assess the knowledge, to determine the attitudes and practices of physicians in the management of pain in the EDs of Cameroon" As to me this is one of the most important things about this study and it otherwise lost in the discussion.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown? 
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review? 
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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