Reviewer’s report

Title: Sleep disorders among educationally active elderly people in Bialystok, Poland: a cross-sectional study.

Version: 0 Date: 05 Mar 2019

Reviewer: Patricia A. Carter

Reviewer's report:

Exploration and description of the prevalence of insomnia in elderly persons is of great importance and is the stated aim of the project reported here. However, there are a number of flaws that require attention prior to this manuscript being in publishable form.

First, while the aim is stated, it is unclear which research question(s) were explored in this project. Explicitly stating the RQs would allow for improved formatting and flow of the manuscript. This would also allow the reader to understand the scope of the data to be presented and to assess the fit between the approach and the reported findings.

Background: The information provided in this section is brief, disorganized, and there is no synthesis or evaluation. Essentially, little is presented that provides the reader with evidence to support (or an argument for) the need to conduct this project. This is another place where clearly stated aim(s) and research question(s) might offer an organizing framework for the information communicated. There is a lack of information regarding the theoretical/conceptual framework that guided this investigation.

Methods: This section dedicates a large amount of space to a discussion of the different groups where participants were recruited. However, there is little to support that there were significant differences between these groups. Therefore, this section could be reduced to more concisely describe the "recruitment sources". This would leave more room for a discussion of how the participants were recruited, the approach utilized for obtaining consent, and the distribution of the study instruments (including how they were to return the instruments). Additional information is needed regarding the explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria used for this project. There is data reported in demographics table 1 that is not mentioned in the text (occurrence of sleep disorders in the past). What is this variable? Why was it important to include in the table?

Instruments: It is unclear why the authors included two insomnia indexes in this study. The items are nearly identical and the correlations are as expected. A number of tables are dedicated to presentation of these findings and do not offer anything new that could not be adequately covered in the text. However, further discussion of the decisions to use 2 nearly identical insomnia instruments is necessary. Use of the ESS for excessive daytime sleepiness is a good choice and could have indicated that there was undiagnosed Sleep Apnea; however, this was not
discussed. There appears to be no information regarding habitual sleep onset, offset times, duration, latency, or disturbances reported. If this data was collected, it might help to further describe the nature of the insomnia experienced in this population.

Statistical Analysis: Statistics reported are appropriate. However, correlating two valid and reliable instruments who measure the same phenomenon does not offer much new information.

Results: This section requires major reworking to offer the reader a clear and concise summary/evaluation of the findings from this project in comparison with what is currently known in the literature. Use of the key findings of this project to focus this section would be helpful. Compare and contrast these key findings with those reported in the literature.

Discussion: This section would benefit from a bit more discussion of how the key findings identified in this project could be applied to research and practice areas. In the opening, there is an argument put forward that suggests these findings could support primary care physician's diagnosis and treatment of sleep disorders in this population.

Overall, this is an important topic and with refocusing and revisions, this work may have important and useful information to share.

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

No

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.

No

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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

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