Reviewer’s report

Title: An observational study of patho-oncological outcomes of various surgical methods in total mesorectal excision for rectal cancer: a single center analysis

Version: 0 Date: 21 Nov 2019

Reviewer: Hossam Elfeki

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for inviting me to review this manuscript concerning a retrospective study in the patho-oncological outcomes of various surgical methods in rectal cancer, my major concern regarding this study is that it compares three approaches for rectal cancer treatment, however the authors did not mention how did the select the patients in each group, or what was the indication for every approach or the policy in their center. As there is a huge discrepancy in the group numbers.

The authors also mentioned in their inclusion criteria "the presence of complete medical record and regular clinical follow-up" this introduce selection bias, it is better to state the total number of cases that had been performed in the study period then may be in a flow chart, they can state how many with complete data.

The median follow-up duration for the three groups was around four years, yet the authors did not mention if the follow-up was for 100% of the patients or some of them had lost follow-up during this period.

Another major concern is that the authors are reporting the overall survival with kaplan Meier curves, yet there I didnot find any data regarding mortality rates in any of the groups.

The kaplan Meier curve quality is very poor and incomprehensive, please upload higher quality.

With regards to the predictors of the CRM involvement, there were overall 30 events of CRM involvement and according to the famous rule of 10, you should have 10 events per each examined predictors, which in the current study should not be more than 3 to avoid overfitting the model, however, the authors examined 10 predictors in their model which could hinder the results. please consult your statistician with regards to this analysis.

The numbers in the first paragraph of the results don't add up, 175 open+82 Robotic+37 Lap does not equal 300, please correct

The manuscript needs thorough language revision by a native speaker.
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.

No

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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