Reviewer’s report

Title: Reducing underreporting of stigmatized pregnancy outcomes: results from a mixed-methods study of self-managed abortion in Texas using the list-experiment method

Version: 0 Date: 08 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Aisling O'Donnell

Reviewer's report:

Review

Manuscript ID: PRCH-D-19-00271

Manuscript title: Reducing underreporting of stigmatized pregnancy outcomes: results from a mixed methods study of self-managed abortion in Texas using the list-experiment method

This paper presents an investigation of the ability of a novel method, the "list experiment", to predict population levels of self-managed abortion; something that is difficult to measure due to the desire to avoid judgment. The paper also presents further evaluation of the utility of the method in relation to how women interpreted the method and the wording of the relevant item, to refine the use of this method. As a psychologist with a research interest in the stigmatisation of abortion, I know that prior research confirms the intentional non-disclosure of abortion experiences. Given this, and given the risks associated with self-managed abortion more specifically, it seems clear that there would be a benefit to having an accurate way to measure its prevalence.

The introduction to the paper is brief and extremely clear. I felt the rationale for the importance and appropriateness of the present study was well demonstrated.

I must point out that I do not have expertise in the particular methods and software used to analyse the data in these linked studies - so other reviewers will be better placed than I to comment on these. However, the analyses were explained and reported clearly and appear appropriate to the data and to the study design(s).

Any limitations that I might have identified based on the issues with item wording in the list experiment were identified and discussed critically by the authors in their discussion. I particularly liked the conclusion, which made clear the potential applications of this method in terms of understanding population needs and improving healthcare.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

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

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

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.

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

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.