Reviewer’s report

Title: Alternative or complementary attitudes toward alternative and complementary medicines

Version: 1 Date: 14 Oct 2018

Reviewer: Trine Stub

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Alternative or complementary attitudes toward alternative and complementary medicines BCAM-D-18-01206R1

This study aim to examine distinct patterns of attitudes towards ICHA in people virtually facing chronic illnesses. This was investigated in a web-based study of 1,807 participants.

This is a well-written manuscript. The background is good. The results are presented in a trustworthy manner and the statistical analysis are solid.

I have however, some methodological concerns regarding the design and will in the following addresses some of these concerns:

Method:

1. This is a web based study and in order to participate you must be familiar and have access to the internet. This implies that people with no internet access did not get the opportunity to participate. It is also reason to believe that the participants is positive to research in general and to the topic of this study in particular. This self-selection is a threat to the validity of the study because the reason for self-referral may be associated with the outcome of the study. In that respect selection bias may have occurred. Please address these methodological issues in the limitation section in the discussion.

2. I find it problematic that healthy people shall pretend that they are seriously ill, and answer questions based on limited information presented to them. I do not think people can fully understand/imagining the burden of having these diseases. Schizophrenia, MS and major depression may affect cognitive ability and reasoning, making it difficult to know how these groups of patients would have answered the questions. A mix method design, including individual interviews with some of these patients would have improved the validity of this study. Please elaborate on this in the discussion.

3. Please include a reference for the Helsinki Declaration
Result:

1. The response rate is low (16%), which is a challenge to the validity of the findings. The non-responders may differ in significant ways from those who responded, and is also a threat to the generalizability of the findings. Please address this in limitations/discussion.

Conclusion:
Please rewrite the conclusion and include that the result must be interpreted with caution do to the virtual nature of this study.

**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.

No

**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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Acceptable

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