Reviewer’s report

Title: Complementary and alternative medicine use among outpatients during the 2015 MERS outbreak in South Korea: a cross-sectional study

Version: 0 Date: 09 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Siti Nurkamilla Ramdzan

Reviewer's report:

This is a good study and good job for producing this article. I think this paper will be more meaningful if you could provide the following suggestions, this will help readers to understand you study better as well as increase the reproducibility of the study.

The method used is appropriate. However, additional information is needed and my suggestions are as follows;

1) Inclusion of the questionnaire (translated in English) as a supplementary - this will help readers understand the context and how were the questions phrased. Was the use of CAM asked in relation to MERS-infection e.g. current usage of CAM when having symptoms/diagnosed with illness? or usage started after outbreak - even before having symptoms/diagnosis?

2) needed more description on the development of the questionnaire - any previous questionnaire used to guide the development? based on literature? theory? expert opinion? was validity testing done? what type of validity? what was changed after pilot? any second pilot?

3) Data collection: How was the survey conducted? self-administered or surveyor assisted? any missing response from the respondents. if yes, how was this resolved and analysed.

Result section: suggest to rephrase statement: (line 183) Age over 40 (OR: 2.673, CI: 1.200-5.951; OR: 4.633, CI: 1.869-11.484) - this statement is not clear as only mentioned group above 40 but the statistics showing 2 ORs and CIs. Suggest to clearly state the difference was noted in 2 different age groups between 40-49 and above 50.

Table 4: please can you explain why the 'perceived danger of MERS outbreak on health' was categorised into 2 (mild and severe) why others were categorised into 3 groups (low, moderate and severe). A statement at the footnote is needed.

Discussion section
The discussion was well written but I think one important and interesting finding was the incongruent findings of potential predictors of CAM with other diseases. Why is/are the possible reason(s)?
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:

Acceptable

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.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal