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: 11 Nov 2019

Reviewer: Syed Imran Ahmed

Reviewer's report:

Please include all comments for the authors in this box rather than uploading your report as an attachment. Please only upload as attachments annotated versions of manuscripts, graphs, supporting materials or other aspects of your report which cannot be included in a text format.

Please overwrite this text when adding your comments to the authors.

Thank you for your submission, a simple but yet interesting one, exploring CAM use among general population during MERS outbreak. Below are my comments, that you may find relevant and useful.

As MERS outbreak affected South Korea in the year 2015 and the data was collected during that period, I wonder why it took so long for authors to publish this work? This is because, it may have different importance and acceptance, even in the local context, if it was published during that time or at least soon after.

Overall, the manuscript needs improvement both from language as well as standards of cross-sectional study reporting point of views.

Title: Needs to be revised to make it more attractive and reflective

Abstract: Background should be reduced to give more weightage to Methods and Results; also it needs to be very objective, and not detailed.

Methods require changes to include sample/sampling, highlight sample obtained with response rate, remove the word 'descriptive' in the beginning. p-value set to be indicated, Include SPSS with version used for analysis.

Results need changes; where ever word like most, more, majority etc., are used, please include number with percentage (in the brackets). Similarly inferential statistical findings to be presented with numbers and p-values.

Conclusion should be re-written and must be a conclusion of the findings without the repetition of the findings.
Background: Though reasonably done, the section could be made more strong by providing literature review and relating it to the need of the study, in particular to South Korean context. It would also be appropriate that all key-words must be well-introduced and linked with each other, while using a deductive approach to narrow down towards the study objectives and needs for this study. If possible, do introduce a paragraph to introduce South Korean health system, particularly in relation to CAM use, regulation towards CAM use and practice as well as, challenges & issues related to CAM use among Korean Public, especially in alleviating acute illnesses like SARS, MERS etc.

Methods:
Though most of the standard information on reporting cross-sectional studies are present, it would be appropriate to use subheadings to denote each section under methods. You may refer to this link for the standards for all sections, in order to make this manuscript more competative. https://www.strobe-statement.org/fileadmin/Strobe/uploads/checklists/STROBE_checklist_v4_cross-sectional.pdf

Results: Subheadings used are not appropriate and too long at times. Make appropriate headings, while ensuring only key findings are presented, and remaining referred with appropriate table numbers for details. Also appropriate and strong reporting sentences are needed at few places.

Discussion: This should be the essence of manuscript from the readers perspective. At present, it is not strong and describing findings. Do not repeat findings or merely compare findings with some other similar work. It should be discussed with plausible reasons, arguments, justifications etc.

Include "Study Limitations" before conclusion and make conclusion appropriate as mentioned in the abstract section. It would also be great to include, "Future Implications" based on the findings.

References: Will be updated for sure, once the changes are made.

Thank You!

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 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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