Reviewer’s report

Title: Psychological distress among medical students in conflicts: a cross-sectional study from Syria

Version: 1 Date: 16 Mar 2017

Reviewer: Patrick Barlow

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript presents a somewhat rare case where, if anything, the statistical methods are *over* explained. The methods described are both appropriate and statistically sound, so there are no concerns for revisions from a statistical perspective. A few comments that may be considered discretionary would be:

1) I am curious to know the rationale for using a statistical logistic regression model (i.e. backwards, stepwise) when the variables used for the model had been hypothesized as possible predictors. I would have preferred the use of a hierarchical, hypothesis-driven model as opposed to one based only on statistical significance; however, the results of the study would not likely change appreciably.

2) The logistic regression models are technically producing "Adjusted Odds Ratios (AOR)" in this case since they are ORs produced after controlling for the other factors in the model. A small change, but an important one.

3) The information in Table 3 is very complete, and interesting to a statistician; however, the "B" "SE" "Wald" and "Df" columns are not necessary to making the author's argument. Removing those columns would clean up the table overall and make it much more readable to a non-statistical audience (i.e. the majority of medical professionals). Finally, the "*" to denote statistical significance is redundant considering the full p-value is included and the threshold for significance was stated clearly in the methods.

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.

Unable to assess
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

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