Reviewer’s report

Title: Shall parent / patient wishes be fulfilled in any case? - A series of 32 ethics consultations: from reproductive medicine to neonatology

Version: 0 Date: 25 Oct 2018

Reviewer: Reviewer 2

Reviewer's report:

PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:

OBJECTIVE - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses a testable research question(s) (brief or other article types: is there a clear objective)?

Yes - there is a clear objective

DESIGN - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?

No - there are minor issues

EXECUTION - Are the experiments and analyses performed with technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?

No - there are minor issues

INTERPRETATION - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?

Yes - the author's interpretation is reasonable

OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Could an appropriately REVISED version of this work represent a technically sound contribution?

Maybe - with major revisions
PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: The research question is interesting, and the investigators have done a good job of designing an effective review with some interesting insights.

However, the writing is a bit of a mess. I gather that the authors might not be native English speakers, which is understandable. There is a need for some heavy editing to provide greater clarity, and the moving of content from one section to another.

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

This is essentially a systematic literature review without meta-analysis. It should be transparently stated as thus. Line 50: PRISMA is checklist for the conduct of systematic reviews and meta-analyses, yet this sentence begins by saying the LITERATURE REVIEW was conducted according to PRISMA. This does not logically follow.

Line 36: referring to the space between "conception and birth" as a "life period" is politically problematic, unless the authors are overtly stating that life begins at conception.

The entire manuscript is peppered with sloppy grammar like this, and needs a once over from a high quality editor. For instance, in line 40, EC is used in the plural ("Not only DO EC...."), but in the same sentence it is used in the singular ("IT has even been shown to..."). Similarly, there is a need for better paragraph separations. For example, lines 36-48 can easily be 2 or more paragraphs.

There is a great deal of confusion about what goes into the Methods section and what goes into the Results section. For example, lines 59-91 seem mostly relevant to METHODS, yet they appear in the LITERATURE SEARCH SECTION. The literature search is a portion of the methods, and should not be separate.

Similarly, in the Methods are listed the numbers of studies reviewed. These numbers are in fact the RESULTS of the search process, so should be reported in the RESULTS section.

On line 163 there are two commas and an ellipsis followed by a phrase in round parentheses. I don't know what the two commas signify or if this is a typographical error or a type of grammatical nomenclature with which I am unfamiliar. The parenthetical phrase should be in square brackets, though.

Lines 168--180 is expressing two different ideas that are entangled. Some rewriting for clarity would be appreciated.
Line 206: I am unfamiliar with the phrase "red thread". Please describe the meaning.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

The authors should strive for clarity. The core of the research is fine and interesting. As this is a systematic review, some mention of how the conclusions were landed upon would be useful: was a narrative synthesis employed, a thematic analysis, or is the purpose of the paper to simply describe the contents of the studies that were identified?

Note: This reviewer report can be downloaded - see attached pdf file.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

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

No

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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.

This reviewer has been recruited by a partner organization, Research Square. Reviewers with declared or apparent competing interests are not utilized for these reviews. This reviewer has agreed to publication of their comments online under a Creative Commons Attribution License attributed to Research Square and was paid a small honorarium for completing the review within a specified timeframe. Honoraria for reviews such as this are paid regardless of the reviewer recommendation.

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.