Reviewer's report

Title: Values and value conflicts in implementation and use of preconception expanded carrier screening - an expert interview study

Version: 0 Date: 09 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Rebecca Bennett

Reviewer's report:

This paper aims to 'investigate values that experts recounted in relation to implementation and use of preconception ECS'. It does this with a number of interviews from members of Swedish ethics committees.
I cannot comment on the validity of the empirical work done which I presume another reviewer will verify.

While there has clearly been a great deal of work that has gone into this paper at the moment it lacks a clear purpose that would be needed to provide value to these interviews.

The main problem with the paper as it stands is it is not clear why the authors wanted to know what values influenced these experts in their decisions in this area. The authors need to be clearer from the outset what question they wanted to answer by doing this research.
A further problem with this paper as it stands is that it is likely that these results would be similar to most people's comments on an ethical issue and it is therefore not clear why it is useful to know that these 10 people think about autonomy/respect for persons, nonmaleficence/do no harm, justice etc etc.
If the purpose of the paper is to identify the sort of values that are shaping discussions of this issue in Swedish ethics committees then we need to know why doing so is important.

The paper starts, in a number of places to do more than just reflect what these 10 people see as the pertinent values here, it starts to argue about these values and the ethical arguments in this area but only in fits and starts as space won't allow a full discussion of this.

This paper has potential and I can see the work that has gone into the interviews it reports, however, to make the most of this hard work the authors need to be much clearer a) what the question was that they were attempting to answer b) why this is an important question to answer c) what their answer to this question was as a result of these interviews and d) what this work adds to the debate.

If this can be done then the work done in the interviews can really have some impact. However, it would be advisable to focus on reporting these interviews and the values expressed rather than trying to do more and start analysing these values and arguments as this is too much for one paper to do.
Detailed comments
This is a bit of an over simplified view of this debate. There is a great deal of debate around how useful principles such as dignity are when they are so ambiguous for instance. It is not clear that there is any consensus on these principles any part of the world.

I’m not sure what point you are making here and this ends up being difficult to follow.

Page 5 - first full sentence needs a reference.

But why do you want to know this? What question are you trying to answer with this study? Your aim later in this page needs to come earlier in the paper so that the reader can understand what the paper wants to do.

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

Unable to assess

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.

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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