Reviewer's report

Title: Prediction of life-story narrative for end-of-life surrogate's decision-making is inadequate: a Q-methodology study

Version: 0 Date: 25 May 2018

Reviewer: Daniel Drewniak

Reviewer's report:

Dear authors,

I was asked to review your manuscript entitled "Prediction of life-story narrative for end-of-life surrogate's decision-making is inadequate: a Q-methodology study".

The manuscript examined surrogates' prediction of life-story narrative of family members regarding end-of-life issues. In addition the extend it is based on family specific knowledge in comparison to shared background was analysed. The research question is an important one as there is a need of knowledge on (surrogate) decision-making in end-of-life issues. Furthermore, the manuscript is well written and the study was well conducted. However, some recommendations may further improve your manuscript:

1. On page 6 (line 17) it is mentioned that one eligibility criteria was education > high school. What was the reason for this decision? Surprisingly the high education level is mentioned later in the manuscript (page 22; line 10) as a study limitation. Therefore, I think this point needs some more justification.

2. What was the mode of data collection? It seems to be a pen and paper survey. However, I would recommend to clearly name the mode of data collection (pen and paper, online, face to face).

3. Based on point 2 on page 6 (line 56) it is mentioned that Q-sort completeness was checked immediately. What does that mean exactly? Was it "controlled" by a study member, and is this a potential source of bias?

4. On page 8 (line 28) the authors write that the study was conducted in three steps. Were there essential time spans (like several days) in between the different steps, or was it that the next steps followed immediately?
5. On page 10 (line 48) it is explained how prediction accuracy of life-story was examined. However, I think this explanation belongs rather into the methods section than into the results.

Beside these points I really enjoyed reading your manuscript. It is interesting and this sort can be useful for example for further developments in advanced care planning or shared decision-making tools.

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

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