Reviewer’s report

Title: Knowledge and Attitudes of Physicians toward Research Ethics and scientific Misconduct in Lebanon

Version: 0  Date: 01 Nov 2019

Reviewer: Rebecca Pentz

Reviewer's report:

Background: please provide more information about particular ethics research rules in Lebanon. For example, are RECs required? What does the Lebanese National Consultative Committee on Ethics (LNCCE)) do? How active is it? If its function is very limited, this might explain the low awareness of it.

Line 107::please name the 7 facilities from which you gathered this information, or at least describe them more fully. Are they geographically and ethnically diverse?

Line 109 states "collected using direct interviewing after participants' consenting." I take it from this description that not all the questionnaires were filled out online. Were some presented in person in an interview format? If so, how many? Were the responses different?

Line 118 states: "The second part tackles research misconduct and 118 was developed based on a previously validated questionnaire [20]." Reference 20 did not validate the questionnaire. They developed and used it, but it was not validated.

Footnote 19 is incomplete

Lines 116 -126 seems to be inconsistent. It is stated that there are 2 parts to the questionnaire but then there are 4 points. Can you clarify?

Line 148 states "targeted ethnic diversity goals outlined in the grant proposal." But no ethnicity is reported. Did you ask for ethnicity? That would be helpful. Please report it.

IN THE METHODS SECTION, PLEASE OUTLINE NUMBER OF QUESTIONS IN EACH CATEGORY. AND POINT OUT THAT ALL THE QUESTIONS ARE PROVIDED IN THE TABLES(IF THIS IS TRUE). To make it clearer, describe the directions for the answers, likert scale, very frequent/rare, in an asterick section for each table, so the tables can be easily interpreted.

Line 239 reads: "As outlined, almost half of physicians have reported witnessing scientific misconduct at some period of their careers, mainly disagreement about plagiarisms, fabricated and falsified data, and authorship.

THESE AREN'T DISAGREEMENTS - THE ONLY DISAGREEMENTS WOULD BE ABOUT AUTHORSHIP THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE IS UNCLEAR LINES 259-260:: However, nowadays, better knowledge of research ethics guidelines such as safety, respect of autonomy, and social benefit of research outcome rules over to maintain the trust of the patient.

LINE 276 STATES:" reflecting the dearth need to conduct such study in Lebanon." DO YOU MEAN DIRE NEED?
other studies, 77.3% of the participants expressed concern about research misconduct occurrence; however, 71.8% of participants were aware of research ethics regulations [17, 18]. Few physicians received proper training in research ethics; yet, qualified physicians should be expected to know about research ethics guidelines beside their clinical skills." HOW DO THESE FINDINGS INFORM YOURS?

Despite the low mean difference, physicians attending research ethics workshops or courses scored statistically higher." MAKE IT CLEAR THIS WAS YOUR STUDY

CONCLUSION: I SUGGEST ADDING SOMETHING ABOUT HIGH RATE OF MISCONDUCT PERCEIVED BY YOUR PARTICIPANTS. This is an important point.

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.

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 recommend additional statistical review

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Needs some language corrections before being published
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