Reviewer’s report

Title: Understanding job satisfaction and motivation among nurses in public health facilities of Ethiopia: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 28 Jun 2018

Reviewer: Khatijah L Abdullah

Reviewer's report:

Since this journal is for international readers, job satisfaction and motivation among nurses are plentiful in clinical nursing journals as a whole. Judgment needs to be made as to whether this manuscript will add to the knowledge/practice base at an international level for the readers.

The background is very weak and needs to provide information of the current situation in Ethiopia. You refer to a number of small scale various studies (ref. 7-12) which will need to be elaborated in terms of strengths, flaws and gaps in knowledge so as to understand where this study fits. It would appear this study was one of the first to develop efforts to understand how to meet the strategic plans of the Federal Ministry of Health's Planning for 2016-2025. When referring to nurse training, what is the situation in terms of the proportion of nurses choosing which programmes, and is it the intention to increase nurses with bachelor and masters degree? This will provide information to understand the comparison of nurses with different characteristics. 'Objective' of study is probably your 'aim' of study. Research question 3 seems to be the same as research question 1. You are not engaging in a 'prediction' study so research 3 may be unachievable.

It is difficult to understand how you randomly selected 125 health facilities (91.1% nurses at health centres and <10% representing hospitals) from a total of 3,372 potential sites. What are the differences (if any) between the 11 regions (you selected 6 of them)? There is confusion about only selecting 5 nurses from each of the health facility to administer a questionnaire. How was '5' determined?

The questionnaire used was adapted from a structured questionnaire on 'job satisfaction' (ref. 23) and factors influencing turnover intentions of nurses in Ethiopia (ref. 20). The reason and process of 'adapting' a questionnaire will need to be reported. In fact, it would seem that you have partially explained this on p.7 (data management and analysis section) w.r.t. 'exploratory factor analysis and Cronbach alpha for each subscale'. A second confusion (which I could not follow) is whether a 5-point Likert scale was used to answer the questions (p.6) or was job satisfaction rated as 1=satisfied (combining responses of strongly agree and agree) or 0=not satisfied (combining responses of neutral, strongly disagree and disagree).
There are ethical concerns that were not mentioned regarding recruitment of nurses and confidentiality of data collected. Issues include voluntary participation, time to receive informed information about the study, and the use of supervisors who were part of the data collection (collecting and checking the questionnaires are completed afterwards). Why was anonymous return of questionnaire not employed to protect identity?

Separate the reporting of the results and the scale reliability (p.10-11) (which is better under the methods section). The discussion compares findings with countries (Nigeria, Slovenia, Cyprus, Ghana, Papua New Guinea) that were not mentioned in the background as being better off or less off compared with Ethiopia. Can elaborate more about the similarities and differences of studies you refer to as this is the discussion chapter. Once this discussion is provided, you can conclude/recommend as you have done on the need for the next steps to take. Although this is study in Ethiopia, what can international gain from it for those nurses working in health centres/hospital settings.

**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.

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.

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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