Reviewer’s report

Title: Health care providers’ and mothers’ perceptions about the medicalization of female genital mutilation or cutting in Egypt: A cross-sectional qualitative study

Version: 0 Date: 07 Mar 2019

Reviewer: Catrin Evans

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting and important study. I recommend publication, however there are a few queries and comments that I feel need addressing first. I describe these below. The main issue is more discussion on the ethical issues involved in conducting this research - as it is a criminalised practice.

Background

* p.2, line 11-12 - include a reference to the WHO definition
* p.2, line 18-19 - support this statement with a reference

Methods

* Also, please discuss the ethical issues in this research, especially around the mystery client approach and how they were addressed. How did the research team deal with the fact that FGM is a criminalised practice, yet some participants may have disclosed performing it or subjecting their daughters to it
* Please add in some more information on how the participants were selected and recruited
* Please add in detail on how the mystery client sites were selected

Data Collection

* Regarding the mystery client approach, please explain why and how the 2 particular scenarios were constructed. Did the team consider a scenario in which requests were made to circumcise babies or younger girls?

Data Analysis

* The approach described sounds like inductive thematic analysis. I would suggest altering this section. I don't think you undertook a grounded theory approach from what you describe here

Results

* How many physicians/nurses actually agreed to undertake FGM? Did any refuse? I would like to see more information and discussion/analysis on how the ensuing discussions/consultations proceeded

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Acceptable

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