Author’s response to reviews

Title: A cross-sectional study on workplace experience: a survey of nurses in Quebec, Canada

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Version: 2 Date: 20 Feb 2019

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

The authors would like to thank the reviewers for their positive and constructive comments which have helped us improve our paper. You will find our responses below.

Reviewer #2:

1st comment:
1-The authors need to state the objective(s) and structure of the article (the sentence they added refers to the aims of the study).

We added a few sentence at the end of the introduction.

2nd comment:
2-The question on representativeness is: how the sample compares -in relation to age, years of experience, etc. to the population from which the sample was extracted.

Response: First, we have made changes in section 3.3 to allow the reader to better understand the sampling steps. Unfortunately, since the OIIQ owns the detailed data of nurses, we can’t compare our sample (n=891) to the 5 161 extracted nurses nor the 62 084 registered nurses practising in a clinical area in the province of Quebec in terms of age, year of experience or level of education, unless making a formal request, which would lead to significant delays. However, data for all nurses that practise in Quebec are publicly accessible (N=70 038). Although this number (N=70 038) includes nurses in teaching, research or management, it is quite reasonable
to compare them to our sample on available data (age and level of education only). We carried out Tests of proportions, considering the proportions observed in our sample vs those of the nursing population, to test the representativeness of our sample.

According to the tests of proportions, age group and level of education are not representative of the population. These observations make it worth mentioning being careful with statistical inference and generalization.

A note of limitation has been added in the paper.

3rd comment:

3- RN4cast is cited but there is no mention of what this international study brings to the understanding of the issue which the article addresses.

RN4cast’s aim was about the main aim of the RN4CAST-study was to study how features of work environments and qualifications of the nurse workforce impact on nurse retention, burnout among nurses and patient outcomes. Our study has a quite different focus which is to characterize nurses’ workplace experience. A note has been added. However, although some instruments are common to both studies. It does not seem we should extend more on RN4Cast in our paper as aims are different.