Reviewer's report

Title: Violence against health care workers in China, 2013-2016: Evidence from the national judgment documents

Reviewer: Zhan Wang

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Reviewer's comments on "Violence against health care workers in China, 2013-2016: Evidence from the national judgment documents"

Thank you for this manuscript. Violence against health care workers is an important issue for health-related human resources. By adopting the litigation database, this manuscript presents more comprehensive data on indicators that are important for understanding and preventing violence. Still, please find my comments to facilitate further revisions.

Major comments

1. A major concern I have is the methodology used in this paper: most of results are based on displaying raw data or risk ratio, and only one Chi-square test was conducted. The lack of rigorous statistical analyses makes this paper fail to stand out from existing literature (for example Li et al, (2019), a similar work on violence against health professionals in China with the same database). I suggest the authors to consider supporting their discussions with more statistical analyses, based on the dataset they collected. If not possible, please discussion the reason.

2. P6: by searching with the phrase "criminal case" in CJOS, one may get documents of criminal judgement, criminal ruling, as well as civil or administrative judgment and ruling that contain the phrase "criminal case" in the full text. So please clarify in the search strategy:

   a. Did you search "criminal case" as the keyword in full text, or as the type of document?

   b. Did you keep cases from both criminal judgment and ruling, or criminal judgement only?

3. P6: authors mentioned "a total of 25,722 potentially relevant cases … were included." However, figure 1 shows "27,914 criminal cases remained", which means 25,722 cases were excluded instead. Please fix the inconsistency between text and figure 1.
4. P6 and figure 1: the exclusion criteria used from the sample of 53,636 cases to 20,000+ cases is not clear. Did you only keep cases belonging to the 13 types of crime? If so, by what criteria do you select those 13 types to represent WPV?

5. In the result section, besides proportions, the absolute value and number of missing values should also be reported. Without information on missing values, one cannot understand to which degree those proportions represent the whole sample.

6. P18-19, last paragraph of the discussion section: authors discussed reasons of WPV by health care institutions, however, this discussion is not supported by data in results. Relative results should be added into the manuscript.

7. A major limitation of using litigation data is that not all WPV cases will be judged at court as criminal cases, some of them may be settled out of court. How will this limitation influence your findings and implications?

Minor comments

8. P4, line 43: I suppose the "violet event" is a typo for "violent event".

9. Figure 2: please check the size of dot (population) in the figure / legend. For example, in 2013 the population of Guangdong reached 100 million. However, the size for the dot of "Guangdong" is obviously smaller than the dot of "10.0 "(in ten million) in the legend.

10. Figure 2: please show labels of other provinces for more detailed information.

11. Figure 2- 7: explanations under figures overlap the main text. Please merge those explanations into the main text.

12. P9: in the paragraph starts with "To account for …", both "hospital visits" and "institutional visits" were used. I suggest to only keep "institutional visits", since readers may interpret "hospital" as a specific type of health care institutions, like that in figure 3.

13. Please change the layout of figure 6 to increase the font size of legends, in order to make it more readable.

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

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