Reviewer's report

Title: Current status on health sciences research productivity pertaining to Angola up to 2014

Version: 2 Date: 23 February 2015

Reviewer: Irene Akua Agyepong

Reviewer's report:

Background

Need to strengthen the way the background is written; the links between the ideas that are being used to justify the research; and how easy it is for a reader to quickly follow the arguments of the researchers. And also agree that they are convincing arguments.

Some of the sentences are long and introduce several ideas. It may make it easier for readers to follow if you break up some of the longer multiple idea sentences a bit e.g. the second paragraph under the background is a single sentence that introduces three different ideas

(1) health research has the potential to contribute to the identification of social and economic determinants of health
(2) health research is a major basis for decision making processes especially
   a. when driven by the demand of the health problems of the population
   b. in the context of implementation research

It would be good to break it up into several simpler sentences that more clearly present each idea rather than keep it as a single complicated sentence. There are several other sentences like that.

On page 4, third paragraph the sentence “When searching the literature on health research in Angola………” is then followed by the sentence “The lack of studies on heath research produced in Angola in the last 61 years motivated this work. I think I understand the kind of argument the researchers are trying to make, but the support for the argument could be stronger.

Methods

Provide some more background for readers on what BVS is why they was the appropriate database to use to compare with medline/pubmed (I assume to see if literature from Angola was well represented in medline /pubmed? It is left to the reader to deduce)

Paragraph 2 on page 5 under methods. “Publications with no abstract available were excluded from the dataset”. Which data set i.e. the BVS data set or the medline /pubmed data set.
Results and Discussion

Page 6 – last sentence under the sub-heading publication rate on this page ‘This exponential trend was also observed in Palestine…..” Not very clear why the comparison starts with the Palestine specific work. Will be good to put it more in context e.g. perhaps you were interested in the specific comparison with Palestine because ?it is also Low and Middle income ?it has also had problems with conflict ? that is the only comparative data available ?? some other reason…..

Health Research topics: Perhaps the focus on Malaria, HIV/AIDS and TB is related to some extent to international research funding opportunities and funding flows. May be worth exploring a bit of that in the discussion.

The presentation on the authorship and affiliation needs to be easier to follow. I had to re read a couple of times and then re think. In the first place it looks to me like the description is about the country in which the institution of the author is based rather than the country of origin or even work of the author. If so that needs to be made clearer. Then there is the issue of the type of institution. Thus even the primary affiliation of the first author was in an Angolan institution; perhaps these Angolan institutions were not necessarily universities or academic research institution. This is because when you analyzed your data by type of institution and the country of location of particular types of institutions then you have Portugal, US and Brazil rather than Angola leading. Or I have not understood. Whatever it is, the presentation needs to be made clearer.

Limitation of the study

I find it hard to comment without a better understanding of what BVS is, why you started with BVS and then moved on to Medline/Pubmed. Also how to interpret the fact that about ¾ of the papers you found in BVS were also in Medline/Pubmed

Conclusions

In the conclusions you mention having an Angolan as the first author. However in the presentation of the findings and discussions, I got the impression you were describing whether the institutes in which first authors were based were located in Angola or not; rather than the nationality of the first author. Clarity needs to be provided on exactly what is being presented to make understanding and interpretation easier.

Figures

Please pay more attention to the labeling of the figures.

Specifically in figure 1 how are we to read the X axis? The scale of the X axis needs to be consistent or else it needs to be better explained. After 1999, the scale is a single year. Before 1999 sometimes it is a single year, sometimes it is two years, sometimes it is even more. Also since 2014 data is only up to 8th June, this needs to be clearly explained in some way. It is explained in the text,
but people may look at the graph in its own right before finding the part of the text where it is explained.

Figure 1 – 3 are all called figure 1 in the text below the graph

Figure 3 – is it “number of publications by country of the primary affiliation of the first author” or “number of publication by country of the primary affiliation of the institution of the first author” Please provide better clarity.

If figure 4 is to be a black and white figure in print you will need to look at patterning /shading that makes is easier to see the difference between the segments of the pie chart.

Figure 5 is not clearly labeled. Is it institution or nationality of first author? Is it type of institution or number of institutions or both?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests