Reviewer’s report

Title: Completeness of reporting in abstracts of randomized controlled trials in subscription and open access journals: cross-sectional study

Version: 0 Date: 17 Sep 2019

Reviewer: Caroline Fairhurst

Reviewer's report:

I found this to be a reasonably interesting manuscript, and certainly within the remit for publication in Trials. I would recommend a few amendments to improve readability and clarity.

Please could you explain why the included trials had to be 'double-blind'? This seems like an unnecessary and stringent criterion.

I am also a little confused about some of the exclusion criterion. A number of the excluded study designs relate more to analysis considerations than design aspects, for example, superiority trials. A trial can be both a two-arm double-blind parallel group RCT and a superiority trial; the two are not mutually exclusive in the same way that a crossover trial and a parallel-group trial are. In the same vein, I would also question 'pragmatic studies', 'non-inferiority trials' and 'open-label studies', and I'm not even sure what is meant by a 'fixed-size trial'? Perhaps the inclusion and exclusion criteria need to be revisited?

The article would benefit from a thorough proof-read, a (not exhaustive) list of typographical/grammatical errors are below:

Consider replacing 'abstracts about randomized controlled trial' with 'abstracts of randomized controlled trials' throughout abstract and manuscript.

Abstract>Results paragraph - add hyphen between 77 and 81% in first 95% CI; consider reporting inter-quartile range instead of 95% CI alongside median number of completely reported items; add 'the' before 'Title' in final sentence.

Background - remove 's' from end of 'abstracts' in third sentence, consider rewording sentence to avoid repeated use of 'important', add 's' to end of 'abstract' (…abstracts are sometimes…). Insert 'The' before 'CONSORT-A' at start of fifth sentence.

Methods - add 's' to end of 'trial' in first sentence of Methods section. Add 'a' between 'be' and 'fully' in final sentence of first paragraph of Methods section.

Results - Add 'A' at the start of first sentence; insert 'the' before 'subscription journals' and 'OA journals' throughout; consider reporting inter-quartile range rather than 95% CI for median reported items;
report p-values to 2 significant figures rather than 3.

**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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All images and figures within the manuscript should be genuine i.e. without evidence of manipulation. No specific feature within an image may be enhanced, obscured, moved, removed, or introduced. If you have concerns about the veracity of the figures you should choose the first option below.

**Statistical review**
Is it essential that this manuscript is seen by an expert statistician? If so, please give your reasons in your report.

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