Reviewer’s report

Title: Inter-rater reliability and concurrent validity of ROBINS-I: Protocol for a cross-sectional study

Version: 0 Date: 28 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Cuncun Lu

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript entitled "Inter-rater reliability and concurrent validity of ROBINS-I: Protocol for a cross-sectional study" reported a detailed research plan. The most highlights are that the results of the study will provide knowledge on: 1) the effect of additional guidance in the use of ROBINS-I, 2) concurrent validity of ROBINS-I by comparing NOS and ROBINS-I. The research plan is critical important to reduce potential bias of research results. Generally, the manuscript with a good writing and reporting quality, but there are some concerns in the present version.

1. The authors need to provide detailed information on Microsoft Excel, such as, version number.
2. The authors should report how to prepare the guidance document, who to write it, and what the content is, etc.
3. The authors should report how to provide the training courses, who is trainer, and his/her background knowledge on ROBINS-I, etc.
4. For the clarity, "Nonrandomized" ("Keywords" section) and "Non-randomized" should report identically in the whole paper, for example, only use "Non-randomized" in the full paper.
5. The authors reported that reviewers with varied academic background and experience on the use of ROBINS-I will participate in assessment, if conclude a better outcome (higher consistency between different academic background), and this result may illustrate ROBINS-I with good reliability and availability. However, if conclude a worse outcome (lower consistency between different academic background), how to balance the influence of other factors, whether the potential influential factors should be reported in this protocol?
6. In "Sample selection", authors reported "cardiology clinical trials" that is confused for me. Besides, the knowledge of clinical specialty may influence the assessment process and results.
7. According to your manuscript, the assessment process major includes two stages. First stage, without guidance, paired-reviewers will assess the selected sample. Second, with guidance, same paired-reviewers will assess the same sample. This will overstate the effect of guidance. Although authors stated this limitation, I thought this question need to be solve cautiously.

Many thanks for the opportunity to review this study, I hope above comments are helpful to improve the present manuscript.
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:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

No competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal
Were you mentored through this peer review?

No