Author’s response to reviews

Title: Ethnic Differences in Patients’ Perceptions towards Isolated Orthopaedic Injuries: a Pilot Study

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Reviewer #1

1. P values for continuous outcomes are reported in the abstract but not in the results.

As currently written, the results reported in the abstract for continuous outcomes are confusing. For example, " Hispanic patients were found to have lower QPI indicating poorer outcomes than Non-Hispanic Whites (mean = 21.4, SD = 11.7 versus mean = 17.3, SD = 14.3; p=0.26)". Here, it is suggested that the QPI indicated poorer outcomes for hispanic patients, yet the result is not statistically significant (expected result likely due to lack of statistical power). Rather, in the results section, the authors elude to the presence or absence of trends in the results, which in the context of a pilot study is more appropriate.

As recommended by one of the reviewers’ it would be best to leave p values out, as they are likely to be misleading given the lack of statistical power of the study. However, I understand the authors’ desire to keep the reporting for the manuscript consistent with the NIH grant submission. Nevertheless, the messaging of the results should accurately reflect the numerical data presented, and should also be reported in a consistent manner throughout the manuscript.
Authors’ response: In the revised manuscript, we have eliminated the p values. All continuous variables are presented by their mean differences and 95% confidence intervals. This is consistent throughout the abstract, results, and table 2.

Reviewer

2. Please revise 'minimum important difference' to 'minimal important difference'

Authors’ response: We changed accordingly.

Editorial:

In addition to the above, please see below:

In abstract, report the mean difference and its confidence intervals.

Authors’ response: As stated above, all results are presented as mean differences and with 95% confidence intervals in the abstract, results, and table 2.

Editor

The design of the study is not mentioned in the abstract and therefore there is a need to justify why it is not an interventional study. Please add the description “cross-sectional observational pilot study” to the abstract and remove the section explaining why trial registration is not required.

Authors’ response: We included this information in the abstract and deleted the explanation why trial registration was not required.
Editor

In the methods section, please revise the following sentence: “The Injustice Experience Questionnaire is a validated 12-item scoring system that has been validated and used in both the English and Spanish language”. Validated is mentioned twice.

Authors’ response: We corrected this sentence accordingly.

Editor

I am still not comfortable with the sample size section. It does not suffice to say the lack of a sample size justification is a limitation. It is much better to call this a convenience sample, and then cite the literature suggesting that this number is large enough for a pilot study.

Authors’ response: We included this statement as suggested and provided the appropriate reference.

Editor

In the statistics section, please describe the statistical methods used to describe the baseline/sociodemographic data.

Authors’ response: In the statistics section we describe these methods including the “…chi-square test to compare gender and smoking…between Hispanics and Non-Hispanic Whites. The fisher’s exact test was used to compare the educational level and income between the two groups. The T-test was used to compare age…”
Editor

I can appreciate the need to make this manuscript look as much as possible as the NIH grant under review. However, we are not proposing that you present different results, we are suggesting that you present the results differently. The result of a t-test is a mean difference. This is a magnitude of effect people can understand. Each time I read this, my first reflex is to try to compute the mean difference myself to see if it is larger than 3 (which you clearly state is the MID). Not showing the mean difference is really not an optimal approach. Please add this information to the text and tables. I will refer you to this paper: http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0046909 (table 2) for how to report the means, mean differences and p-values.

In the text, please report as: The QPI (mean [SD]) was found to point towards worse outcomes in Hispanic versus Non-Hispanic White patients (Mean difference [MD]: 5.4; 95% CI xx-xx; p = 0.26).

Authors’ response: In the revised manuscript, we report all continuous variables using the mean differences and 95% confidence intervals throughout the abstract, results, and table 2. We have removed the p values from the manuscript. In the revised manuscript, we report the numerical values in the exact same style as in the publication cited by the Editor.