

OHDM Peer Reviewer's Checklist for Research Papers

General

1. Is the topic of the paper appropriate for the journal concerned?
2. Does the paper conform to the published guidelines for authors of the journal concerned?
3. Is it on an important or significant topic?
4. Does the study add to the existing knowledge-base?

Presentation

5. Does the title accurately reflect the content of the paper?
6. Does the paper have a logical construction?
7. Does the length of the paper need adjusting (too long or short)?
8. Is the paper written in a clear and easily understandable style?
9. Is the paper free of grammatical or typographical errors?

Abstract

10. Is there an abstract that conforms to the journal's published guidelines for authors?
11. Does the abstract present an accurate synopsis of the paper?

Introduction and Aims

12. Is the introduction appropriate to the paper's subject?
13. Is the literature that has been reviewed, relevant and is it comprehensive?
14. From the introduction does the study seem original in concept?
15. Do the aims of the study follow logically from the literature review and are they clearly stated?
16. If appropriate, is a null hypothesis stated.

Methods

17. Is the design of the study consistent with its aims?
18. If applicable, was a pilot study performed to test the methodology?
19. Is the sample representative of the population in question?
20. Are controls needed and used in the study?
21. If controls are used, are they appropriate?
22. Is the method of selecting the sample/cases and controls clearly described?
23. Are other details such as numbers, time periods, statistical tests used clearly described and consistent?
24. If relevant, have examiners been trained and calibrated?
25. Are details of such training and calibration given?

26. If questionnaires and proforma have been used, have they been tested, are they relevant to the study and are they presented either as figures in the paper or via a link to a web-site?
27. Could there be ethical objections to the study?
28. Does the paper include a clear statement on whether or not ethical approval was sought and if so, who from?
29. If ethical approval was not sought, is there a clear explanation why?

Results

30. Are the results and any statistical tests presented in a clear and unambiguous manner (tables, figures, graphs, etc)?
31. Are there any missing data and if so are they accounted for eg drop-outs, non-responders, etc?
32. Are the numbers, percentages, statistical values accurate and clear?
33. If statistical tests have been used, are they appropriate?
34. If statistical tests have not been used, can this be justified?
35. Is the sample too small to justify the findings ?
36. Although they may be statistically significant are the findings clinically significant?
37. Are the results believable?

Discussion

38. Does the discussion critique and discuss the methodology used?
39. Does the discussion comprehensively discuss the results?
40. Are the results discussed in relation to other important literature on the topic area of the study?
41. Does the discussion extend beyond the methods and results of the study?

Conclusions

42. Do the conclusions accurately reflect the results of the study?
43. Are the conclusions clear set out?

Acknowledgements

44. Is any source of funding identified?
45. Is there a statement of conflict of interest?
46. Is there a statement of exactly how each author contributed to the paper?

References

47. Are the references accurate, up to date and relevant?