OPEN PEER REVIEW

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As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
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- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://sites.kowsarpub.com/kowsar/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

Health Scope
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Peer Review Report for "Air Pollution and Mortality in the Elderly in Kerman, Iran"

Author(s): Zahra Askari Baravati, Narges Khanjani, Mohammad Malakootian

Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 23 May 2020
Revised Date: 20 Apr 2021
Accepted Date: 27 May 2021

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0)

25 Jul 2020

Dear AE,
Specific comments are listed below:
Abstract
- Abstract is not written well and should be revised. The main and important principles of study method have not been mentioned. Indeed the abstract is not a suitable and sharp representative of report content.
Introduction
- The authors should expand the literature review of the previous published studies just in the context of the present study.
Materials and methods
- The authors have to add a section to describe the data collection including the method used to clean collected data and estimate missed data.
- As you mentioned on the manuscript there is just one air pollution monitoring station in Kerman city, since the pattern of air pollution and concentration of different pollutants specially NOx and PM2.5 considerably vary across the city, how is it possible to assign population exposure to this station?
- As we can see there are some extreme values in the concentration of some pollutants the question is that how do the authors reduce the effect of extreme observations on the statistical results?

Results and discussion

- The findings of the study should be comprehensively discussed with the support of existing relevant studies. To provide a comprehensive overview, authors should refer and compare more relevant studies.
- The authors should add the strength and limitation of their study.
- What are your suggestions for the future studies?

Thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 25 Aug 2020

Dear AE,

The manuscript is suitable for publication after major revision. The work is original, however authors should mention the novel contribution to the field of Air pollution and mortality. The data have been convincingly interpreted and article is well formulated.

Authors are advised to incorporate the following comments/suggestions in the manuscript before publications.

- Many such studies have been done and the relationship between air pollution and mortality is significant. Please explain clearly in the introduction the objectives and innovation of this article.
- Write and discuss the rate of deaths from air pollution in a table with similar articles in this field.
- English should be improved throughout the manuscript.
- Quantitative information should be provided in the abstract.
- The concussion should be concise and to the points indication the application of the work.

Thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 6 Sep 2020

Dear AE,

My comments about the mentioned manuscript are as follows:

- Please write abstract without multi-section, write it in one section.
- Introduction has been not written well and needs to be revised.

Mention the statistical methods used for the analysis of data in material and methods and abstract.

- As it is possible, for numbers in text and table ≤ 9.99, use two digits beyond the decimal point; for numbers between 10.0 and 99.9, use one digit beyond the decimal point; and for concentrations ≥ 100, use the nearest whole number.
- Compare obtained data with other published studies in a table.
- Mention the obtained main data in the abstract.

Best regards

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 6 Sep 2020

Dear EIC,

The manuscript is studied, and there are some comments which should be addressed by the author. According to the comments, the document needs major revision.

Kind regards,

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (0) 8 Sep 2020

Dear Author

According to reviewers' comments, the manuscript needs “Major revision”.

Best Regards

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Thank you for reviewing our paper entitled “Air pollution and mortality in the elderly in Kerman, Iran-105567”

Reviewers' Comments:

Reviewer 1:
Specific comments are listed below:
Abstract
- Abstract is not written well and should be revised. The main and important principles of study method have not been mentioned. Indeed the abstract is not a suitable and sharp representative of report content.
We revised the abstract.

Introduction
- The authors should expand the literature review of the previous published studies just in the context of the present study.
We added some text to the introduction.

Materials and methods
- The authors have to add a section to describe the data collection including the method used to clean collected data and estimate missed data.
In this study, observations which were more than ±3 SD away from the mean were recognized as outliers, and were dealt with as missing data. Then missing air pollution data was estimated using the Expectation-Maximization (EM) algorithm in SPSS20 software. Details of these methods can be found in our previous publications (Dehghan 2020).

- As you mentioned on the manuscript there is just one air pollution monitoring station in Kerman city, since the pattern of air pollution and concentration of different pollutants specially NOx and PM2.5 considerably vary across the city, how is it possible to assign population exposure to this station?
This is a common way of estimating exposure in ecological studies. It is impossible to determine individuals’ exposure to air pollution separately.

- As we can see there are some extreme values in concentration of some pollutants the question is that how do the authors reduce the effect of extreme observations on the statistical results?
Which extreme value? We have not mentioned the raw data in the text.

Results and discussion
- The findings of the study should be comprehensively discussed with the support of existing relevant studies. To provide a comprehensive overview, authors should refer and compare more relevant studies.
We added some text to the discussion.

- The authors should add the strength and limitation of their study.
We added this to the end of discussion.

- What are your suggestions for the future studies?
We added this to the end of discussion.

Reviewer 2:
Dear Editor my comments about mentioned manuscript are as follows:
-Please write abstract without multi-section, write it in one section.
We checked the recently published articles in Health Scope. All have structured abstracts.

- Introduction have been not written well and needs to be revised. Mention to the statistical methods used for analysis of data in material and methods and abstract.
We revised the Introduction. We added the statistical test to the methods.

-As it is possible, for numbers in text and table ≤ 9.99, use two digits beyond the decimal point; for numbers between 10.0 and 99.9, use one digit beyond the decimal point; and for concentrations ≥ 100, use the nearest whole number.
In table 1 all numbers are whole. In table 2, all numbers should have the same decimal points and we have written them up to 2 decimal points. In the remaining tables we have to keep up to 5 decimal points, because the changes are small.

-Compare obtained data with other published study in a table.
We added a table to the article.

-Mention to the obtained main data in abstract.
The main results have been mentioned in the abstract.

Reviewer 3:
The manuscript is suitable for publication after major revision. The work is original, however authors should mention the novel contribution to the field of Air pollution and mortality.
Some text has been added to the Introduction.

The data have been convincingly interpreted and article is well formulated. Authors are advised to incorporate the following comments/suggestions in the manuscript before publications. Many such studies have been done and the relationship between air pollution and mortality is significant. Please explain clearly in the introduction the objectives and innovation of this article.
This is the first study done on elderly mortality and air pollution.

Write and discuss the rate of deaths from air pollution in a table with similar articles in this field.
We added a table to the article.

English should be improved throughout the manuscript.
We edited the text.

Quantitative information should be provided in the abstract.
There are too many numbers and we cannot report all of them in the abstract.

The concussion should be concise and to the points indication the application of the work.

The conclusion is concise and is pointing to the main aims of the study.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (1) — 12 May 2021

Dear AE,
The article corrections have been made and the article is acceptable.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (1) — 14 May 2021

Dear AE,
The authors have successfully addressed all comments; therefore, the above manuscript can be accepted for publishing.
Best regards

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (1) — 14 May 2021

Dear EIC,
The authors have successfully addressed all comments; therefore, the above manuscript can be accepted for publishing.
Best regards

Ramazan Mirzaei: EIC | **Revision** (1) — 27 May 2021

Dear Author
According to reviewer comments, Your article has been accepted for publication
Best Regards