OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open Peer Review (OPR)

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 "**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

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- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
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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:

Peer Review

Health Scope
Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.5812/jhealthscope.91737
Published in: Health Scope: 8(4) ; e91737

Peer Review Report for "A Descriptive Study on Attitudes Toward Local Health Resource Allocation: The Case of Chongqing Province in China"

Author(s): Yi Wei

Review Timeline:

Submit Date:	19 Mar 2019
Revised Date:	5 Aug 2019
Accepted Date:	6 Sep 2019

Revision (0)

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

Mohammad Khammarnia : Reviewer

27 May 2019

Dear Authors,
An English Language Editor should revise the manuscript.
Abstract:
It is suggested to revise the title of the manuscript and write it briefly.
How were respondents selected?
Remove subheadings from the introduction.
The importance of the study should be written properly.
I suggest moving the following paragraph to the introduction section and improving the study objectives.
“The question of this study is what the Chinese values and preferences in local

healthcare rationing are, considering the decisive role of government in China's healthcare governance. This study analyzed the health authority officials' rationing preferences compared with health workers (most with health-related jobs). The attitude test can investigate the officials' values in their work, although they might not identify the values explicitly in their cognitive decision-making. Local health officials play the key role in health rationing and can truly participate in the decision-making process, and the health workers were on the front-line of implementing health policies and can have a say in the evaluation of current local rationing."
How validity and reliability of the questionnaire assessed?
Write about ethical considerations and the consent form completion process in the study.
Use of new and further references for quality improvement of the manuscript. Also, use of the following papers:
1. Necessary Requirements for Implementation of Financial Reform in the Iranian Health Sector
2. Decision-Making in Australia's Healthcare System and Insights From Complex Adaptive Systems Theory

Regards,

Heshmatollah Asadi : Reviewer

16 Jun 2019

Dear Authors:
This is the result of the review of the manuscript "91737".
1. The article needs further editing for the English language.
2. In the abstract, the first sentence should be a short sentence that indicates a problem exists, and the problem is that the authors of this study.
3. Please check keywords in "Mesh".
4. The introduction is weak. The problem was not explained properly. The purpose of the study must be presented at the end of the introduction.
5. The type of the study should be stated in the method section of both the abstract and the manuscript.
6. In the results section, findings should not be discussed and interpreted. Rewrite sentences like "The attitudes towards the fairness of the procedure were quite opposite (see table 6)."
7. Please add 2-4 sentences at the end of the discussion section and state the study limitations
8- Please mention ethical considerations in the method section.
9. What are the practical recommendations for policy-makers and suggestions for future studies?
10. References are outdated. It is necessary to use the new and more reliable references.

Fatemeh Setoodehzadeh : Reviewer

18 Jun 2019

Dear Editor,
The comments for this manuscript are as follows:

1. It is recommended that the two part of background become merged together.
2. It is not mentioned that how was measured the reliability and validity of the self-designed questionnaire in the method.
3. It doesn't need to insert the reliability of questioner in the table at result part. Please explain about the validity and reliability of questioner in the method (Content of the questionnaire)
4. '1 means the least valuable investment program and 5 means the most
5. worthwhile investment program' is repeated in Priority investment.
6. In the result, in the prioritize criteria, in some parts, the results have been interpreted. For example, 'It means that health workers disliked the criteria for the benefit of official promotion or just for easy control'. It is recommended that the explanations transfer to the discussion section.
7. There are several studies about rationing and resource allocation. Please use of them in the discussion section.

8. Please use more references and if there is, use more update references.
9. The English language is poor.
10. Dose the study have any limitation?
11. the title needs to be summarized and clarified.

Best Regards

Fatemeh Setoodehzadeh : Associate Editor

18 Jun 2019

Dear Editor,

The peer review process of the manuscript is finished. According to the reviewer's comments, the manuscript needs "Major Revision".

Best Regards

Ramazan Mirzaei : EIC

21 Jun 2019

Dearauthor
The comments for this manuscript are as follows:

1. It is recommended that the two parts of the background become merged.
2. It is not mentioned how the reliability and validity of the self-designed questionnaire were measured in the method.
3. It doesn't need to insert the reliability of the questionnaire in the table in the

results part. Please explain the validity and reliability of the questionnaire in the method (Content of the questionnaire)
4. ‘1 means the least valuable investment program, and 5 means the most valuable
5. A worthwhile investment program is repeated in Priority investment.
6. In the result, in the prioritized criteria, in some parts, the results have been interpreted. For example, ‘It means that health workers disliked the criteria for the benefit of official promotion or just for easy control’. It is recommended that the explanations be transferred to the discussion section.
7. There are several studies about rationing and resource allocation. Please use them in the discussion section.

8. Please use more references, and if there are, use more updated references.
9. The English language is poor.
10. Does the study have any limitations?
11. The title needs to be summarized and clarified.

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.

Author response:
I would like to express my gratitude to reviewers for their thoughtful reviews. I sincerely appreciate their constructive suggestions and valuable inputs, which are indeed helpful for improving the quality of this manuscript. Accordingly, the manuscript has been carefully revised. All revised parts are marked in blue in the revised manuscript.
Below, I respond in detail to the comments of each reviewer and editor. I hope that my responses and revised manuscript will satisfy my reviewers.

The point-to-point responses to comments are made below:
Reviewer #1
Comment 1: The manuscript should be revised by an English Language Editor.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. Following your advice, the revised manuscript has been proofread. I appreciate your helpful suggestion and hope that the revised manuscript could meet your expectations.
Comment 2: It is suggested to revise the title of the manuscript and write it briefly.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I changed the title and made it more concise.

Comment 3: How were respondents selected?
Reply: Thank you for your question. I explained the method in the part of "Participants and data collection". AS this is a specific questionnaire that needs targeted people who are familiar with the topic and can understand the resource allocation area well, as you can see in the following paragraph.
An attitude test for exploring the priority setting values in local resource allocation was conducted in Chongqing, and the 654 study samples were selected through convenience sampling with the help of local health government and Chongqing health information center 174 officials in health bureau mainly working in local Health and Family Planning Commission (HFPC) including 89 officials from provincial HFPC and 85 officials from county-level HFPC. health workers (480 persons) were non-decision-makers, mostly from medical service suppliers, those who have worked in public hospitals, Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC), Health inspection center (HIC), insurance and drug companies, and universities. They were familiar with health policy and willing to participate in the study.

Comment 4: Remove subheadings from the introduction.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I made the removal.

Comment 5: Importance of the study should be written properly.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I added the importance of the study at the end of the introduction part.

Comment 6: I suggest moving the following paragraph to the introduction section and improving the study objectives.
"The question of this study is what the Chinese values and preferences in local healthcare rationing are, considering the decisive role of government in China's

healthcare governance. This study analyzed the health authority officials' rationing preferences compared with health workers (most with health-related jobs). The attitude test can investigate the officials' values in their work, although they might not identify the values explicitly in their cognitive decision-making. Local health officials play the key role in health rationing and can truly participate in the decision-making process, and the health workers were on the front line of implementing health policies and can have a say in the evaluation of current local rationing."
Reply: Thank you for your valuable suggestion. After carefully thinking about the structure of the manuscript, we agree with you that recommendations are likely to be more suitable in the introduction section, and I have made the change.

Comment 7: How was the validity and reliability of the questionnaire assessed?
Reply: Thank you for your question. I did the pilot survey, and the questionnaire design was adjusted in time according to relevant reliability and validity values . With your suggestion, I will explain in the section on Content of the questionnaire in the Methods part.

Comment 8: Write about ethical considerations and the consent form completion process in the study.
Reply: The ethical approval does not apply to my study. Please let me give a short explanation.
I did ask the university ethical committee's approval and got suggestions, and they replied that my research was not in the scope that demands ethical approval. Because my research is
Only to collect people's attitudes towards macro health rationing in hypothetical conditions
Of limited budget and resources, and related to their preferences and subjective priority Choices.
Here's the scope that needs approval mentioned by the committee, according to Chinese laws.
According to the Regulation on Ethical Review Methods Relating to Human Biomedical Research (Trial Implementation), issued by the National Health and Family Planning Commission of the People's Republic of China (Available at: http://www.nhfpc.gov.cn/zwgk/wtwj/201304/27e44e14b66e4faebc350739755c8b59.shtml). Ethical Reviewing covers these two areas:
1. Research activities are adopted on human physiology, pathology, and diseases of diagnosis, treatment, and prevention, by using modern physics, chemistry, and biological methods in the human body.
2. A medical technology formed by biomedical research or its products experimentally applied to the human body.
In general, my research objects are beyond that scope. The questionnaire for the study is to collect the participants' attitudes and preference of local health resource rationing decision, I

sufficiently did the consent before they are willing to respond in two ways, first in the prefix of the questionnaire with introduction of the purpose of the survey and inform
that they can quit at any stage if they don't want to answer the question. Second, I confirmed that the participants answered anonymously without any personal biological or clinical information filled in, and their individual answers will be protected and not open to the public.

Ethical approval does not apply to the study because it collected respondents' attitudes rather than biomedical or clinical information. In the preface of the questionnaire, respondents were told that they could quit at any stage if they did not want to answer the questions. In addition, I assured them anonymity and protection of individual data.

Comment 9:Use of new and further references for quality improvement of the manuscript. Also, use of the following papers:
1. Necessary Requirements for Implementation of Financial Reform in the Iranian Health Sector
2. Decision-Making in Australia's Healthcare System and Insights From Complex Adaptive Systems Theory
Reply: Thank you very much for your careful reading of the manuscript. I made changes accordingly. References have been updated in the revised manuscript.

Reviewer #2

Comment 1:The article needs further editing for the English language.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. Following your advice, the revised manuscript has been proofread. I appreciate your helpful suggestion and hope that the revised manuscript could meet your expectations.
Comment 2: In the abstract, the first sentence should be a short sentence that indicates a problem exists, and the problem is convincing that the authors of this study.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I summarize the problem in the abstract first sentence.

Comment 3:Please check keywords in "Mesh".
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion that I have renewed some keywords and changed the title.

Comment 4: The Introduction is weak. The problem was not explained properly. The purpose of the study must be presented at the end of the introduction
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I referenced more literature and added the purpose of the study at the end of the introduction.

Comment 5:The type of the study should be stated in the method section of both the abstract and the manuscript.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I have added this to both the abstract and manuscript title.

Comment 6: In the results section, findings should not be discussed and interpreted. Rewrite sentences like “The attitudes towards the fairness of the procedure were quite opposite (see table 6)."
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I moved similar sentences to the Discussion part.

Comment 7:Please add 2-4 sentences at the end of the discussion section and state the study limitations
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I added the limitation at the end of the article.

Comment 8: Please mention ethical considerations in the method section.
Reply: The ethical approval does not apply to my study. Please let me give a short explanation.
I did ask the university ethical committee's approval and got suggestions, and they replied that my research was not in the scope that demands ethical approval. Because my research is
only to collect people's attitudes towards macro health rationing in hypothetical conditions
of limited budget and resources, and related to their preferences and subjective priority choices.
Here's the scope that needs approval mentioned by the committee, according to Chinese laws.
According to the Regulation on Ethical Review Methods Relating to Human Biomedical Research(Trial Implementation), issued by the National Health and Family Planning Commission of the People’s Republic of China(Available at: http://www.nhfpc.gov.cn/zwgk/wtwj/201304/27e44e14b66e4faebc350739755c8b59.shtml). Ethical Reviewing covers these two areas:
1. Research activities are adopted on human physiology, pathology, and diseases of diagnosis, treatment, and prevention, by using modern physics, chemistry, and biological methods in the human body.
2. A medical technology formed by biomedical research or its products experimentally applied to the human body.
In general, my research objects are beyond that scope. The questionnaire for the study is to collect the participants’ attitudes and preference of local health resource rationing decision, I
sufficiently did the consent before they are willing to respond in two ways, first in the prefix of the questionnaire with introduction of the purpose of the survey and inform
that they can quit at any stage if they don’t want to answer the question. Second, I confirmed that the participants answered anonymously without any personal biological or clinical information filled in, and their individual answers will be protected and not open to the public.

Comment 9:What are the practical recommendations for policy-makers and suggestions for future studies?
Reply: Thank you very much for your careful reading of the manuscript. I explained recommendations for policy-makers in the conclusion part and added suggestions for future studies at the end of the article.

Comment 10:References are outdated. It is necessary to use the new and more reliable references.
Reply: Thank you very much for your careful reading of the manuscript. I made changes accordingly. References have been updated in the revised manuscript.

Reviewer #3
Comment 1:It is recommended that the two parts of background become merged.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I combined the two parts.

Comment 2:It is not mentioned how the reliability and validity of the self-designed questionnaire are ensured in the method.
Reply: Thank you for your question. I did the pilot survey, and the questionnaire design was adjusted in time according to relevant reliability and validity values . With your suggestion, I will explain in the section on Content of the questionnaire in the Methods part.

Comment 3:It doesn't need to insert the reliability of the questionnaire in the table in the results part. Please explain the validity and reliability of the questionnaire in the method (Content of the questionnaire)
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. With your suggestion, I moved the table into the section on Content of the questionnaire in the Methods part.

Comment 4-5: '1 means the least valuable investment program and 5 means the most worthwhile investment program' is repeated in Priority investment.
Reply: Thank you for your valuable suggestion. I deleted the repeated sentence.

Comment 6: In the result, in the prioritized criteria, in some parts, the results have been interpreted. For example, 'It means that health workers disliked the criteria for the benefit of official promotion or just for easy control'. It is recommended that the explanations be transferred to the discussion section.
Reply: Thank you for your valuable suggestion. After carefully thinking about the structure of the manuscript, I agree with you that recommendations are more suitable in the discussion section, and I made the change.

Comment 7:There are several studies about rationing and resource allocation. Please use them in the discussion section.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I quote the references accordingly.

Comment 8: Please use more references, and if there are, use more updated references.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I updated the references accordingly.

Comment 9:The English language is poor.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. Following your advice, the revised manuscript has been proofread. I appreciate your helpful suggestion and hope that the revised manuscript could meet your expectations.

Comment 10:Dose the study have any limitations?
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I added the limitation at the end of the article.

Comment 11: The title needs to be summarized and clarified.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I changed the title and made it more concise and understandable.

From Editor :
Comment 1: It is recommended that the two parts of the background become merged.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I made the combination.

Comment 2: It is not mentioned how the reliability and validity of the self-designed questionnaire were measured in the method.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I added this in the method part.

Comment 3: It doesn't need to insert the reliability of the questionnaire in the table in the results part. Please explain the validity and reliability of the questionnaire in the method (Content of the questionnaire)
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I put it in the method section.

Comment 5: '1 means the least valuable investment program, and 5 means the most valuable
worthwhile investment program' is repeated in Priority investment.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I deleted the repeated sentence.

Comment 6: In the result, in the prioritized criteria, in some parts, the results have been interpreted. For example, 'It means that health workers disliked the criteria for the benefit of official promotion or just for easy control'. It is recommended that the explanations be transferred to the discussion section.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I transferred that to the discussion section.
Comment 7:There are several studies about rationing and resource allocation. Please use them in the discussion section.
Reply: Thank you very much for your careful reading of the manuscript. I add and compare with the reference accordingly.

Comment 8:Please use more references, and if there are, use more updated references.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. References have been updated in the revised manuscript.

Comment 9:The English language is poor.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. Following your advice, the revised manuscript has been proofread. I appreciate your helpful suggestion and hope that the revised manuscript could meet your expectations.

Comment 10:Dose the study have any limitations?
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I added this at the end of the article.

Comment 11:the title needs to be summarized and clarified.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I changed the title.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Mohammad Khammarnia : Reviewer — 2 Aug 2019

Dear Authors,
In the second review process phase, correct the following items:
Abstract, Background: line 3; please remove “descriptive study” and move it to the method section.
Abstract, methods: what kind of software was/were used for data analysis? Declare it.
Abstract, results; declare other important results briefly.
Introduction: use of further references for introduction improvement.
Methods: write the type of the study (descriptive and analytical study) in the method section.
Although your study is a deceptive survey and it was not a clinical trial; however, the study should have been confirmed by an Ethical Committee. Nevertheless, remove the sentence “Ethical approval is not applicable for the study because it collected respondents’ attitudes rather than biomedical or clinical information”.
Check Table 1, health workers column, the sum of participants in the health workers column does not match with sample size (480), eg, 273+381=654. Check all Tables.
Conclusion section: Write the conclusion section briefly. Remove reference number from conclusion.
Remove “Israeli health system” and replace with “some countries”
Move the study limitation to the end of the discussion section.

After these corrections, the manuscript could be published in the Journal.

Fatemeh Setoodehzadeh : Associate Editor — 3 Aug 2019

Dear Editor,

The second review process of the manuscript is finished. According to reviewer comments, the manuscript needs "Minor Revision".

Best Regards

Ramazan Mirzaei : EIC — 5 Aug 2019

Dear author,

The second review process of the manuscript is finished. According to reviewer

comments, the manuscript needs "Minor Revision".

Best Regards

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (2)

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.

Author response:
I would like to express my gratitude to reviewers for their thoughtful reviews. Accordingly, the manuscript has been carefully revised. All revised parts are marked in blue in the revised manuscript.
Below, I respond reviewer's suggestions one by one. I hope that my responses and revised manuscript will satisfy my reviewers.

The point-to-point responses to comments are made below:
Reviewer #1
Comment 1: Abstract, Background: line 3; please remove "descriptive study" and move it to the method section.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. Following your advice, the revised manuscript has been put in the method section.
Comment 2: Abstract, methods: what kind of software was/were used for data analysis? Declare it..
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I have added the software type "IBM SPSS Statistics 21.0 "in the method section.

Comment 3:Abstract, results; declare other important results briefly.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I added more details on the abstract result part.

Comment 4:Introduction: use of further references for introduction improvement.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion and I added some reference, but since the similar study is rare on the attitudes towards health priority setting area, reference were limited and my study is also an explore in china since it is more like an experiment test as the priority setting in health rationing is implicit and I tried my best to find those valuable reference that were valuable and closed to my study, and hope the revised introduction can meet your satisfaction.

Comment 5:Methods: write the type of the study (descriptive and analytical study) in the method section.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion. I added the type of descriptive study in the method section.

Comment 6:Although your study is a deceptive survey and it was not a clinical trial; however, the study should have been confirmed by an Ethical Committee. Nevertheless, remove the sentence "Ethical approval is not applicable for the study because it collected respondents' attitudes rather than biomedical or clinical information".
Reply: Thank you for your valuable suggestion. I agree with you that ethical consideration is quite important, even in the attitudes survey, and I deleted the sentence you mentioned.

Comment 7:Check Table 1, health workers column, the sum of participants in the health

workers column does not match with sample size (480), eg, 273+381=654. Check all Tables.
Reply: Thank you for your question. With your suggestion,I did the check on all tables and data. Please allow me to give a short explanation. The "273(male) +381(female)=654(total) " corresponds to the total samples. As my table shows is three-part; the left column is about the health officials (174 samples), the middle column is about the health workers(480 samples), and the right column is the total (654 samples). I added more space between each column to make the three-column division more explicit.

Comment 8:Conclusion section: Write the conclusion section briefly. Remove reference number from conclusion.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I made the reference to the background part. It seems more brief on the revision type.

Comment 9:Remove "Israeli health system" and replace with "some countries"
Reply: Thank you very much for your careful reading of the manuscript. I made changes accordingly.
Comment 10:Move the study limitation to the end of the discussion section.
Reply: Thank you for your suggestion, and I made the change.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (2)

Fatemeh Setoodehzadeh : Associate Editor — 3 Sep 2019

Dear Editor,

The second revision process of the manuscript is finished. The final decision for this manuscript is "Accepted".

Best Regards

Ramazan Mirzaei : EIC — 6 Sep 2019

Dear author:

The second revision process of the manuscript is finished. The final decision for this manuscript is "Accepted".

Best Regards,