PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE (PROVISIONAL)</th>
<th>Burnout in Consultants in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Ireland- a cross sectional study.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUTHORS</td>
<td>McNicholas, Fiona; Sharma, Sonita; oconnor, cliodhna; Barrett, Elizabeth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VERSION 1 - REVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVIEWER</th>
<th>Ana Lúcia Nunes Henriques Institute of Public Health, University of Porto</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REVIEW RETURNED</td>
<td>28-May-2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, I think the article is complex to understand, although the objective is quite simple. Methods are incomplete, results are confusing and stating aspects that are not in the tables and obvious limitations (e.g. sample size and extrapolation of results) are not addressed in the discussion. In order to be published, it needs considerable changes.

Title:
An acronym should not appear in the title, it is not even clear what is means SICC

Abstract:
Methods section is poorly described. There is lack of what means CBI values, options of response, what comparisons groups are you going to use, what type of analyses are you going to do. In the conclusion section, it is not clear what it means “higher than expected” and the last sentence of this section can also be excluded.

Strengths and limitations: the 2 email reminders are not strength. The pertinence of the research topic would be more important

Background:
Line 8: I would suggest to take the web address from the text.
Line 13: it is not clear with who are you comparing the Irish workers.
I believe that the way you introduce the health area its not very clear. Most of the literature cited on the second paragraph of the results is only related to doctors. Therefore, I think you need to state why you decide to look just for that professional category. Most of the time you talk about stress but from time to time you talk about burnout (e.g. in the abstract, you mix both) Are you
using them as synonyms? You should restrict to one construct and use the same name throughout the paper.
Paragraph lines 46-52: you need a reference to support the idea.

Methods:
Objectives and methods are poorly defined and a lot of information is missing
You will evaluate the level of work related stress among consultants, psychiatrics, etc.... not CAMHS. You need to define more rigorously your population study.
Regarding the study questionnaire, it is not clear what were the variables you collected. Is the questionnaire part of the appendix of the article?

Results:
This section is dense and too long. By reading the entire section it is not clear what are the main results and which ones are on the tables. A lot of them are not and it does not seem very correct, in my opinion.
You use the acronym OPD but it is not explained what it means.
There are parts on the results that, in my opinion, should come in the methods section (e.g. line 50-52)

Discussion
The first paragraph is very similar to a results section. I would avoid the proportions here.
Also, and very important, is that there are big limitations that are never discussed and that does not allow to make real comparisons with other studies: the sample size is very low (it almost could be a qualitative study), there are no sociodemographic data to characterize the sample, etc.
You should be more conservative in your conclusions considering that when you state that "a large proportion of consultants" you are referring to very few people.

Tables: you need more and better tables to present all of your results. Having results with different meanings in the same column is confusing.

Margaret Thompson
School of Psychology.
Building 44,
University of Southampton
Southampton
SO17 1BJ

06-Jun-2019

Review Bmjopen open
Background literature informative and appropriate
Method
Cross sectional design
Survey monkey link sent by Irish college to all consultants: follow up emails were sent
Copenhagen burnout Q used looks a useful Questionnaire
Statistics appropriate
Response rate low? Discuss
P7 line 6 presumably those who felt BO were less likely to retrain in CAP? Just to make that clear Discussion interesting and draws appropriate conclusions.

REVIEWER
Asha Shenoi
University of Kentucky

REVIEW RETURNED
29-Aug-2019

GENERAL COMMENTS
The authors have done a Cross sectional study looking at the Stress levels in Consultants in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Ireland. This is a topic of great significance to emotional wellbeing of nurses and their work performance. So I appreciate authors examining this topic. Authors have concluded that consultants in CAMHS experience significant level of stress and work related burnout (36%). Lack of confidence in the government commitment to investment in CAMHS and ineffective health board management were associated with higher burnout scores. The consultants who experiences burnout were significantly more likely to leave the job.

Following are my comments and recommended revisions:
1. The strength of the manuscript is that it addresses a topic of great importance to the field of occupational health. There is dearth of studies on burnout so authors have aimed to examine this relationship.
2. There are many abbreviations that need expansion. eg SICC, ESRI, OPD, HSE
3. Line 58- Delete the extra bullet point
4. Background: please define burnout
5. Background Line 8- Is the web address a reference?
6. For references, please follow uniform format. For example, add the references in parenthesis followed by period. There are several references that need to be formatted this way. Please double check all.
7. Background Line 19, long and fragmented sentence, please consider revising. One suggestion is to add 'result in' before ripe breeding ground.
8. Study Questionnaire-Line 38 needs a reference.
9. Study questionnaire Line 55- Define Higher scores for burnout. What is the cut off used?
10. Results- Please follow a uniform format for reporting results. For example, when reporting both numbers and percentage, Use (N=10, 13%).
    Line 28, line 53, Line 57. Several under results and discussion – please correct.
11. Results Line 54-55 Please replace little with No or minimal change.
12. Please explain National mental health policy and vision for change. Why did authors include that in the questionnaire?
13. Copenhagen Burnout Inventory- Please include the cut off values for moderate and severe burnout.
14. Copenhagen Burnout Inventory Line 18 needs a reference
15. Many words are inappropriately capitalized. For example, Consultants, Total burnout, Trainees Please correct them.
16. The word Burnout is one word. Occasionally it is used as Burnout.
17. How did authors define completion of the survey? Answering all the questions or a certain percentage?
18. Discussion line 32-33 – How can the authors compare by emotional exhaustion? It is one of the 3 domains described in Maslach Burnout inventory. It will be more appropriate to use the term burnout.
19. Please expand PHQ and specify if it was PHQ-9
20. Discussion line 40 – did authors mean identity (instead of identify)
22. Discussion Line 51-52. Please explain the relevance of this statement.
23. Page 8 Line 25 – what do authors mean by Re (regarding?)
24. Page 8 Line 29 – Ireland instead of Irish?
Page 10 Lines 16-18.
Needs a Period after the sentence.
25. Please briefly explain Balint groups.

REVIEWER
Anthony Montgomery
University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece

REVIEW RETURNED
10-Sep-2019

GENERAL COMMENTS
The main idea of the paper is a worthy one; examining stress levels in Consultants in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Ireland. However, I am unable to recommend it for publication until the authors address the following issues.

1. The research idea and methodology are basically sound, but the paper would benefit from being written with an academic audience in mind. At present, it reads more like a report for a government committee rather than an academic article. For example, in the final paragraph of the introduction, the authors state that no study has investigated burnout and stress in the specific population. However, there are studies examining burnout in psychiatrists and child psychiatrists (specifically).
Here are some examples:
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14034940210133880

2. Additionally, the authors fail to mention a recent Irish study examining burnout in consultant hospital doctors, in which a sample of psychiatrists were included (see Margiotta et al, 2019).

3. The manuscript does not mention any limitations. The research has many limitations such as the fact that it relies of one questionnaire and does not examine any scientific hypotheses.
4. The ‘Strengths and Limitations’ section needs to be completely rewritten. The authors simply describe different elements of the study rather than focusing on the added value of the study.

5. The authors need to calculate reliability statistics (e.g., Cronbach’s alpha) for the burnout scales.
6. The authors developed questions that ask respondents about perceived support from the Irish health service executive (HSE). However, the authors have provided no information on how these questions were constructed. It is possible that the reported correlations between these questions and the burnout questionnaire represents common method variance.

**VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE**

Reviewer: 1

Reviewer Name: Professor Ana Lúcia Nunes Henriques

Institution and Country: Institute of Public Health, University of Porto

A statement regarding lack of any competing/conflict of interest has been included.

Additional detail has been added to the method section, the result section regarding the CBI scale has been completely represented, using a format which has been more typically used when this scale has been used. This allows the reader to gauge the prevalence of varying levels of burnout, rather than reporting on mean BO scores, as had been presented initially. On reflection, this is a far superior way to present the data and allows direct comparison with other studies using the CBI. It also allows the results to be more understandable to an audience not familiar with the scale scoring system.

The lower than hoped for sample size has been discussed as part of the study’s limitations,

The acronym (SICC, which was a short hand for Stress in CAMHS’ Consultants) has been removed.

Additional detail and results have been added to the abstract, and prevalence rates of the CBI used, instead of means, to assist in clarity of results. The conclusion section has also been revised as requested.

Strengths and limitations have been added at the end of the paper and expanded, and reference to the 2 emails removed. As suggested, the pertinence of the research topic has been included.

Background:

The background has been amended highlighting the risk of BO in a broader range of professionals, web address removed, clarification is given as to the comparison between workers in Ireland and their European counterparts examined in the ESRI report. Consistency in the use (and spelling) of burnout has been used. References have been added as requested (Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. 2016), and the website address removed from.

Methods:

More detail is given regarding the participants, recruitment and additional questions included as part of the survey. The questionnaire will be provided, should the editor wish to include it as suggested at the end of the article. More detail has been provided on the statistical analysis plan.

Results:
Most of the revisions submitted relate to this section. It has been simplified, re-ordered, and tables and figures have been included to compliment the text. Acronyms have been kept to a minimum and explained when used.

Discussion

Undue repetition on results has been addressed. The strength and limitations have been expanded, and an effort has been made to source studies using similar methodology that allow for more direct comparison. Over-interpretation of results has been avoided.

Tables:

A number of tables (5) have been included to assist with data interpretation.

Reviewer: 2
Reviewer Name: Professor Margaret Thompson
Institution and Country: School of Psychology.
University of Southampton

The low response rate has been discussed, including the difficulties in inferring whether the low result might reflect an under or over estimate of BO levels. Clarification has been made regarding the association between a lower mean BO score and those who would consider retraining in child psychiatry.

Reviewer: 3
Reviewer Name: Professor Asha Shenoi
Institution and Country: University of Kentucky

We have included as a strength of the paper the importance of this topic, and have provided a definition of the term and concept of burnout. Editorial changes suggested have been taken on board, and we apologise for the many spelling and formatting errors, inappropriately use of capitals and undefined abbreviations. We have clarified the salience of the document a Vision for Change, which represents the national mental health strategy in Ireland, against which staffing levels and services are set. Additional information is provided regarding the scoring and interpretation of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory and clarification regarding survey ‘completion’ and we have included number of answered questions for each variable examined. Balint groups have been described briefly.
Much of the results and discussion sections has been rewritten and presented in a more academic way. We are grateful for the drawing our attention to very pertinent additional references (both in Ireland and in child psychiatry) and we have included these, and others relevant papers identified as a result. In addition, there has been many other new papers written in the time period from initial submission to now, and we have also included some of these in our discussion. As mentioned above, a limitation section has been included. Reliability statistics (e.g., Cronbach’s alpha) have been presented. The exact wording of study specific questions (for example relating to the HSE) has been included to allow the reader understand the content/response.

**VERSION 2 – REVIEW**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVIEWER</th>
<th>Ana Henriques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institute of Public Health, University of Porto, Portugal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| REVIEW RETURNED | 22-Oct-2019 |

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

Overall, I think that the entire paper should be revised by an English native speaker.  
"was used to measures personal" (abstract)  
"consultamnt" (objective)  
"this allows an examination", when it sould be something like "this scale allows an examination" (methods)  
"their reported rates of BO was lower" (discussion)  

These are just a couple of examples but you can find a lot more sentences that need revision. Also, there are lack of spaces between words (e.g. on background) that you should be pay attention to.  

**Background**

You should explain what BO means in this section and only then using the abbreviation throughout the article.  
It is also not clear what you consider as “minimum missing data”. I believe it is better to state how many people you lost because of this.  

**Results**

I was not able to see any new table! Where they available in the new version? For that reason, I was not able comment any statistics part.  

the headings Statistics, Study questionnaire etc should be subsections of the Methods section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVIEWER</th>
<th>Asha Shenoi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Kentucky</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| REVIEW RETURNED | 21-Oct-2019 |
Thank you for incorporating the feedback. Best of luck.

Anthony Montgomery
University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece

12-Nov-2019

The authors have addressed all of my concerns. Congratulations on the improved paper. I’m very happy to recommend for publication. Just one very minor issue. The authors refer to their burnout measures (the CBI) as standardized in the text. To my knowledge, it is well-validated and reliable, but not standardized. However, if it has been standardized, the authors should provide information on this.

Reviewer(s)’ Comments to Author:

Point by Point response:

Reviewer: 3
Reviewer Name: Asha Shenoi
Institution and Country: University of Kentucky

Please state any competing interests or state ‘None declared’: None Declared
Please leave your comments for the authors below
Thank you for incorporating the feedback. Best of luck.
Our Reply: Thank you for your support and suggestions.

Reviewer: 1
Reviewer Name: Ana Henriques
Institution and Country: Institute of Public Health, University of Porto, Portugal

Please state any competing interests or state ‘None declared’: None declared.
Please leave your comments for the authors below
Overall, I think that the entire paper should be revised by an English native speaker.
“was used to measures personal” (abstract)
“consultamnt” (objective)
"this allows an examination", when it should be something like "this scale allows an examination" (methods)

"their reported rates of BO was lower" (discussion)

These are just a couple of examples but you can find a lot more sentences that need revision. Also, there are lack of spaces between words (e.g. on background) that you should be pay attention to.

Our Reply: Thank you, although all the authors are native English speakers, we appreciate the importance of reaching a suitable academic writing standard and we have paid particular attention to our formatting, grammar, and sentence structure. We hope that these changes will allow acceptance for publication and thank you for all suggestions made.

Background

You should explain what BO means in this section and only then using the abbreviation throughout the article.

Our Reply: This description of burnout is provided in the background and although we have not restricted ourselves to the use of the abbreviation BO only throughout the article, we have made sure that the abbreviation does not precede the explanation.

Burnout (BO) is a term used to describe long-term, unresolved, work-related stress, with feelings of physical and emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment as central features. In this context, burnout is thought to occur when demand exceeds capability or availability. In conditions where there is increased demand but reduced or inadequate resources, this imbalance will be most evident, presenting a ripe breeding ground for occupation stress.

It is also not clear what you consider as "minimum missing data". I believe it is better to state how many people you lost because of this.

Our Reply: We have also clarified what was meant by "minimum missing data" as suggested. We have added this text in the analysis section: There was minimal missing socio-demographic and study specific questionnaire data, the number of respondents for each variable is represented in each table by ‘n’. All respondents completed the CBI in full.

Results

I was not able to see any new table! Where they available in the new version? For that reason, I was not able comment any statistics part.

Our Reply: 5 tables are presented in the article.

the headings Statistics, Study questionnaire etc should be subsections of the Methods section.

Our Reply: We have corrected this.
Reviewer: 4

Reviewer Name: Anthony Montgomery

Institution and Country: University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece

Please state any competing interests or state 'None declared': None declared

Please leave your comments for the authors below

The authors have addressed all of my concerns. Congratulations on the improved paper.

I'm very happy to recommend for publication. Just one very minor issue. The authors refer to their burnout measures (the CBI) as standardized in the text. To my knowledge, it is well-validated and reliable, but not standardized. However, if it has been standardized, the authors should provide information on this.

Our Reply: We have corrected our reference to the CBI being standardized and clarifies it as being validated. Thank you for your support and suggestions.