

Review of: "Demographic and Clinical Characteristics of Refugee Children Utilizing Healthcare Services of Türkiye (2021-2022): A Single-Centre Study"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Reviewer's Comments

General comments

The authors deal with an important refugee issue. Since the start of the Syrian civil war, a large number of refugees have been transiting through Turkey on their way to Europe. Unfortunately, most of them remain stranded in Syria with their children. This study is important because it describes the demographic and clinical characteristics of refugee children using healthcare services in Turkey. The results of this research will be necessary to prepare the care of this vulnerable population. The article is well written, with a good introduction (except for the study justification part), good methodology, good presentation of results, and good discussion. However, there are some areas for improvement before publication.

I. Title

1. According to the STROBE Statement, you must indicate the study's design with a commonly used term in the title. Please complete it.

II. Abstract

• Introduction

2. The authors did not mention the rationale for their research. This is not the first study of refugee characteristics carried out in Turkey. What are the limitations or points not addressed in previous work that justify this study? Please complete it.

3. The objective is being made more complex for no good reason and needs to be simplified. I suggest that the study aims be simplified in this way: "The study aim was to identify demographic and clinical characteristics of refugee children utilizing healthcare services in Turkey."

• Methods

4. The design of the study is not "retrospective observational study," but a cross-sectional study using a retrospective approach to data collection". Change, please.

5. Show how descriptive statistics have been calculated to summarize the qualitative and quantitative variables in the article. Present also all statistical tests performed.

- **Results**

6. Proportions must be presented with their confidence intervals in the results. I ask authors to add confidence intervals for each calculated proportion.

7. Add the proportions with their confidence intervals for the various diseases found in the majority of refugee children.

III. Introduction

8. The following sentence: "In March 2022, Ministry of Health Director announced that 754,000 Syrian babies had been born in Türkiye since 2011. This has created a considerable burden on the pediatric and maternal health services" does not have a bibliographic reference. Please complete a bibliographic reference.

9. The state of the literature concerning the theme developed was not given towards the end of the paper. The authors did not mention clearly the rationale for their research. They are not the first to work on understanding patterns of healthcare utilization for refugee children in Türkiye. What are the limitations or points not addressed in previous work published mainly in Türkiye that justify this study? I suggest to list and synthesize some of the papers presented around the ideas. Given this way, the research gap will easily emerge to justify the need for the current study.

10. The objective is being made more complex for no good reason and needs to be simplified. I suggest that the study aims be simplified in this way: "The study aim was to identify demographic and clinical characteristics of refugee children utilizing the healthcare services of Türkiye."

11. After the aim statement, it could be nice to complete the section with a statement showing the importance of this study. One (or not more than two) sentences can easily present the importance.

IV. Methods

General comments

12. This section is made up of the following sub-sections, which must be clearly limited. Please rewrite this part by matching the content of each subsection.

- **Study design**
- **Setting**
- **Study population and sampling procedures**
- **Data collection procedures:**
- **Variables (dependent and independent variables)**
- **Data analyses**
- **Ethical considerations**

13. The design of the study is not “retrospective observational study,” but a “cross-sectional study using a retrospective approach to data collection.” Change, please.

14. Nothing has been written in the study setting. I ask the authors to present here the pediatric emergency department of the University of Health Sciences Sancaktepe Training and Research Hospital, Istanbul.

15. To show the normality of a distribution, you can use either the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test or the Shapiro-Wilk test, but not both. Taking into account the sample size, which test did the authors actually perform?

16. Nowhere in the methodology did the authors mention whether they had pre-tested the questionnaire before using it. If they had, then how?

V. Results

17. Proportions must be presented with their confidence intervals. I ask authors to add confidence intervals for each calculated proportion.

18. In the title of all tables, add the study period.

19. For each table, add the confidence intervals for each percentage presented.

VI. Discussion

20. Add in the limits Berkson's paralogism resulting from the use of hospital data instead of community data.

21. In the conclusion, it's not enough just to mention the limitations, but to show what has been done to mitigate their impact on the results found. Please complete this section.

Conclusion of review

Accept for publication after minor revisions.