

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

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Perceptions, challenges, and experiences of healthcare providers in emergency departments regarding workplace violence during the COVID-19 pandemic: Protocol for an exploratory qualitative study from an LMIC
AUTHORS	Naseem, Maleeha; Shahil Feroz, Anam; Arshad, Hajra; Ashraf, Sarah; Asim, Muhammad; Jamali, Seemin; Mian, Asad

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Surita, Fernanda University of Campinas, Obstetrics & Gynecology
REVIEW RETURNED	12-Aug-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>I appreciate the opportunity to review the manuscript with an important theme in ensuring human rights and especially for pointing to the involvement of health professionals in emergency areas during the pandemic, and all the risks, including violence in their workplace.</p> <p>However, the material presented is not a qualitative or exploratory study, as it does not adequately present its results.</p> <p>I believe the authors have very interesting material but it has not been explored and has not been presented to the reader</p> <p>The introduction is very extensive, the methods are partially described and the results are not presented, as well as the theoretical framework for content analysis.</p> <p>There is a whole technique and for the description of qualitative results, as there is for quantitative data, with the analysis of content and emerging themes, categories, use of pictures, vignettes with the interviewees' speeches and also showing more characteristics of the interviewees, such as age, time at work, etc.</p> <p>So, although the topic is very interesting, I was disappointed as I read the manuscript due to the lack of results presented.</p>
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REVIEWER	Song, Fujian University of East Anglia
REVIEW RETURNED	16-Sep-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>The manuscript provides a helpful review of relevant literature regarding workplace violence to healthcare workers during the covid-19 pandemic. The planned qualitative research may improve the understanding of impacts of workplace violence on healthcare workers in emergency departments. I only have some minor comments for consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Protocol” should be included in the title.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start dates of the research could be more explicitly described. • Inclusion criteria: It is important to be explicit about whether the study will include healthcare workers who have experienced WPV, or all healthcare workers in the ED departments are eligible. • It is important to provide more details on the interview guide developed, which may help the understanding of the investigation scope and the design of similar studies by other researchers.
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

	Reviewer's Comments to Author		
	<p>Reviewer: 1</p> <p>I appreciate the opportunity to review the manuscript with an important theme in ensuring human rights and especially for pointing to the involvement of health professionals in emergency areas during the pandemic, and all the risks, including violence in their workplace.</p> <p>However, the material presented is not a qualitative or exploratory study, as it does not adequately present its results.</p> <p>I believe the authors have very interesting material but it has not been explored and has not been presented to the reader</p> <p>The introduction is very extensive, the methods are partially described and the results are not presented, as well as the theoretical framework for content analysis.</p> <p>There is a whole technique and for the description of qualitative results, as there is for quantitative data, with the analysis of content and emerging themes, categories, use of pictures, vignettes with the interviewees' speeches and also showing more characteristics of the interviewees, such as age, time at work, etc.</p> <p>So, although the topic is very interesting, I was disappointed as I read the manuscript due to the lack of results presented.</p>	<p>Point 1. We thank the reviewer for providing such meticulous feedback and for appreciating the significance of this under-researched topic of WPV experienced by emergency healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Point 2. First of all we apologize for not mentioning in the title that this is a protocol paper and not a findings paper hence there are no definitive results in the paper to present.</p> <p>Point 3: Thank you for your comments, at this phase we have developed the methodology to conduct this study and we yet have to conduct data collection for this study to present the results. These are not mentioned here as this is the study protocol not a finding paper, hence we apologize for the confusion.</p> <p>Point 4: For analysis of the data, we will not employ any prior existing framework. However, we have extensively reviewed the literature and on the basis of that we have developed our approach accordingly. This is based on previous studies conducted on Work place violence. This modified approach for content analysis has been explained in the</p>	<p>Page 13, Line : 259-266</p>

		<p>revised manuscript and the relevant literature is cited.</p> <p>Point 5: We have also added two figures in the Introduction and Analysis section to explain the flow of content analysis and the basic approach for conducting this study .</p> <p>Point 6: We gain apologize for the confusion as this is the protocol paper not a finding paper.</p>	
	<p>Reviewer: 2</p> <p>The manuscript provides a helpful review of relevant literature regarding workplace violence to healthcare works during the covid-19 pandemic. The planned qualitative research may improve the understanding of impacts of workplace violence on healthcare workers in emergency departments. I only have some minor comments for consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Protocol” should be included in the title. • Start dates of the research could be more explicitly described. • Inclusion criteria: It is important to be explicit about whether the study will include healthcare works who having experienced WPV, or all healthcare workers in the ED departments are eligible. • It is important to provide more details on the interview guide developed, which may help the understanding of the investigation scope and the design of similar studies by other researchers. 	<p>Dear Reviewer, we are grateful for your insightful comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point 1: We have revised the title to incorporate protocol in the title which is now revised to “Perceptions, challenges, and experiences of healthcare providers in emergency departments regarding workplace violence during the COVID-19 pandemic: A study protocol for an exploratory qualitative study from an LMIC” • Point 2: The start dates have now been mentioned in the revised manuscript. However we anticipate a delay in completing data collection owing to resurgence of COVID-19 intermittently. • The Inclusion criteria is modified. We will be interviewing all healthcare workers in the ED who will consent to participate in the study as the exposure to violence in not concentrated or directed to any single type of ED worker, therefore all ED frontline staff are equally at risk of WPV, hence, to generalize our inclusion we will follow this strategy. Furthermore, some had experienced WPV and some had not personally experienced WPV, however, they had witnessed acts 	<p>Point 1: Page 1, line 2</p> <p>Point 2: Page 10, line 205-206</p> <p>Point 3: Page 10, line 212</p> <p>Point 4: page 12, line 241-250</p>

		<p>WPV against their fellow colleagues and healthcare workers and will be able to provide valuable insight based on their observations as a witness to these acts of violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will also be including some demographic characteristics like age and gender to be able to justify the transferability of the results later after the conduct of the study. • Thank you for your comment, we have included a more detailed explanation of how we developed the interview guide and how the different components involved were conceptualized and referenced as well. Kindly refer to the supplementary file for detailed IDI guide. 	
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VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Surita, Fernanda University of Campinas, Obstetrics & Gynecology
REVIEW RETURNED	22-Dec-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	Dear authors thank you for the answers congratulations
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REVIEWER	Song, Fujian University of East Anglia
REVIEW RETURNED	28-Nov-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	Authors have satisfactorily addressed my comments.
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