**Magzamen Lab Epi Paper Checklist Spring 2021**

(Thank you to Dr. Judy Heiderscheidt for the inspiration!)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Check!** |
| 1. **Abstract – Using no more than 300 words, and irrespective if the abstract is structured or unstructured, you should have:** |  |
| * Background |  |
| * Objective |  |
| * Methods |  |
| * Results |  |
| * Conclusion |  |
| 1. **Introduction – four paragraph format:** |  |
| * What is the problem? |  |
| * What do we know about the problem? |  |
| * What are our gaps in our knowledge? |  |
| * What do we propose to do to fill those gaps? (Objective statement.) |  |
| **3. Methods –** |  |
| * Study population identified |  |
| * Is it clear who was eligible to participate in this study and who was not eligible to participate (inclusion/exclusion criteria)? |  |
| * Is it clear how sampling occurred? |  |
| * Is your study design clearly defined? |  |
| * Was the definition of the exposure and outcome clearly explained with well-defined cut points if you’re using categories? |  |
| * Did you clearly describe the instrument/measures/tools you used for exposure assessment, outcome assessment, and other covariates in the model? |  |
| * Did you state which statistical analyses were performed? - for descriptive and analytic data, including any software used. |  |
| * Did you appropriately control for confounding and use a DAG to justify your selection of confounders? |  |
| * Did you identify other precision variables and describe them appropriately? |  |
| * Are IRB/IACUC appropriately referenced? |  |
| * Were the methods stated in the past tense? |  |
| * Does the methods section avoid providing results and only contain a description of the methods used to perform the study? |  |
| * Would the reader be able to reconstruct the study based on the description of the methods provided? |  |
| **4. Results -** |  |
| * Does your results section report your statistical findings with accuracy and precision? |  |
| * You MUST include at least one table for descriptive statistics and one table/graph for the measures of association and confidence interval for main outcome. |  |
| * Were figures labeled at the bottom and numbered sequentially (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2…) |  |
| * Were tables labeled at the top of the table and numbered sequentially (e.g., Table 1, Table 2…) |  |
| * Are figures and tables stand alone? If I only had the figure or only had the table would I understand the information contained within? |  |
| * Are the tables and figures labeled in a manner that clearly states what the table or figure is? |  |
| * Are your most important tables figures in the main body in the paper, with other tables and figures included in the Supplemental Information? |  |
| * Are your statistical tests clearly implemented and interpreted? |  |
| * Does the results section describe everything that was learned from the analyses? |  |
| **5. Discussion** |  |
| * Paragraph 1: Reiterate problem |  |
| * Paragraph 2: Reiterate your findings |  |
| * Paragraph 3: Nest your findings in the broader literature: evaluate what’s new, what’s concordant, what’s discordant |  |
| * Paragraph 4: Nest findings in what is known about the mechanisms about the exposure-disease relationship |  |
| * Paragraph 5: Implications for findings (policy, practice, treatment, intervention) |  |
| * Paragraph 6: Implications for future studies |  |
| * Paragraph 7: Study strengths |  |
| * Paragraph 8: Study limitations |  |
| * Paragraph 9: Conclusion |  |
| **6. References -** |  |
| * References are current and relevant |  |
| * All of your references in one reference manager |  |
| * Checked the reference format for the journal to which you are submitting |  |
| **7. Organization, grammar, flow -** |  |
| * Grammatically correct |  |
| * Free of spelling errors |  |
| * Free of causal language if causal inference methods were not used |  |
| * Formatting, page numbers, sections labeled – |  |
| * Content flows *–* |  |
| * Citations: Was there a citation for a sentence that was clearly not the authors’ own information? Were the references consistently formatted? |  |
| * Are whole numbers below ten spelled out? |  |
| **8. Sheryl’s grammar pet peeves** |  |
| **I have not:** |  |
| * Ended a sentence with a preposition |  |
| * Started a sentence with a number |  |
| * Used the phrase “in order to” (just say “to”!) |  |
| * Split an infinitive (“to boldly go”) |  |
| * Used a $2 word when a $.05 word would do. |  |
| * Used “it” as the subject of a sentence |  |
| * Switched tenses in the same paragraph |  |
| * Switched between active voice and passive voice in the same paragraph (active voice always preferred) |  |
| * Used the word “irregardless” because that is not a word |  |
| * Used more words when less work better (e.g, “residents of Fresno” rather than “Fresno residents.” Word count, people!) |  |
| * Have not mixed up its and it’s. “Its” is the possessive form of it; “It’s” is a contraction, meaning “it is”. |  |
| **9. Annoying things to do when you submit your paper -** |  |
| * Cover letter |  |
| * Checked Guide for Authors on paper formatting for your journal |  |
| * Funding sources are acknowledged |  |
| * Authors have adhered to ICMJE authorship guidelines: <http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html> |  |
| * Participants and non-authors are acknowledged |  |
| * Figures are formatted with correct resolution |  |