Reviewer's report

Title: Information literacy skills in a biomedical science curriculum: assessment and intervention.

Version: 1 Date: 2 September 2010

Reviewer: Are Holen

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This paper addresses a very important subject: students’ limited development of information literacy within the health sciences. Information literacy involves the ability to access reliable sources on the internet with evidenced based knowledge, and also, the students’ ability to evaluate adequately the information they tap from the web.

The paper is presenting an empirical study of first year students in dentistry, and the authors show that Google and Wikipedia are far more frequently used by the students than the databases covering scientific findings, the latter are regarded as more cumbersome to explore by the students. Also, the effects of an intervention are tested.

I regard points 1-8 below as major compulsory revisions for this paper.

1. When it comes to the content of the paper, there are many aspects in need of major changes. The paper is too long in relation to its content; I would suggest that the number of pages is reduced by at least 30%, preferably by around 50%.

2. Moreover, the aims of the study should be clearly stated.

3. The presentation of the method does not have the clarity and structure that would be expected in an empirical paper. Design, Procedure, Participants, measures/variables and intervention are not described up to par. The references to Part A and B, to subpart A and to (b) and (2) are more than confusing. The nature and purpose of the intervention also requires an explicit presentation in the method section.

4. The first paragraph of the Result section is not covering any results and should be removed.

5. The Results are not presented in relation to clear aims of study, and in addition, parts of the Result section are comments and reflections made by the authors; they are not without interest, but they rather belong in the Background or in the Discussion.

6. The only part of the paper that I find too short is the Discussion. Main findings should be summed up first, and subsequently, point by point they should be discussed before concluding.
7. I find it irrelevant to include the designations of the local curricula tested, DEN7110, C2011 etc. as well as the name of the persons who are leading or lecturing at the various courses involved.

8. For me, it was impossible to know exactly where the figure legends belonged. There are no figure numbers given on the figures. There are 3 tables, 2 appendixes and 3 figures – together I find that this more than required. Some of the tables could be merged or explained in the text. The relationship between the text of the Result section and the Tables/Figures/Appendices should more evident.

In general I find the topic highly relevant, but more focus, a clearer structure and a well developed argument from aims to method to findings to discussion is warranted.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.