Reviewer's report

Title: Medical Students' Attitudes to Male Homosexuality

Version: 1 Date: 25 March 2012

Reviewer: Todd Morrison

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Below are issues that should be addressed in a revision:

1. Throughout the document, the researchers should use the term “gay men” rather than “homosexuals” or “homosexual men.” (Given their pathological “baggage,” the latter are no longer recommended by the American Psychological Association.)

2. Why is “queer studies” one of the keywords below the Abstract?

3. The authors should justify their decision to measure “male toughness” as a constituent part of homonegativity. None of the items on this subscale focus on gay men or homosexuality; rather, they measure endorsement of hegemonic masculinity, which is a correlate of negative attitudes toward gay men.

4. A critical limitation is the absence of evidence attesting to the psychometric soundness of the authors’ measure of homonegativity. Given the existence of myriad instruments evidencing good scale score reliability and validity (e.g., Modern Homonegativity Scale; Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Knowledge and Attitudes Scale for Heterosexuals [LGB-KASH]; etc.), the authors should justify their decision to create a novel scale.

5. Related to point 4, the authors should furnish evidence demonstrating that their indicant of homonegativity is psychometrically sound. For example, they propose that the instrument assesses three dimensions. Did the authors conduct an exploratory factor analysis to determine if items group together as expected?

6. The authors should omit non-heterosexuals from their analyses. (First, the number of sexual minorities is too small to permit meaningful comparisons. Second, measuring sexual minorities’ endorsement of homonegativity reflects internalized prejudice and, thus, isn’t comparable to heterosexuals’ homonegativity. Third, some of the items would appear to be meaningless to most non-heterosexuals (e.g., “Gay men are disgusting”).

7. For Table 2, means are not very illuminating. I would recommend that the authors provide the proportion that “agree/strongly agree” with each item.

8. For Table 2, the authors report Cronbach’s alpha for each item. This is rather unorthodox. (Alpha cannot be correlated for a single item, so I am rather unclear about what the authors are doing here.) Do these values reflect alpha if the item in question is removed? If so, this column could be deleted.

9. Crobach’s alpha coefficients for two of the subscales are poor. Any idea why? Also, it may be useful for the authors to correct for attenuation in correlation.
coefficients due to measurement error (i.e., poor alpha coefficients).

10. For all Cronbach’s alpha coefficients, 95% confidence intervals should be given.

11. The authors need to clearly particularize how this study makes an incremental advance.

**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 I have no competing interests.