Reviewer's report

Title: Patterns and trends of medical student research

Version: 1 Date: 23 October 2013

Reviewer: Thed van Leeuwen

Reviewer's report:

Some textual issues:
- Under 'Methodology', first paragraph, replace 'where' into 'in which', on lines 11 and 13.
- In the 'Discussion', please explain what the Vancouver Convention means, as not all readers might be familiar with this convention.
- Last paragraph of the Discussion, two times 'is', remove one!

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Being an author of a similar paper, I recognize both the relevance of the topic of this study, as well as the problems related to data collection.

Our analysis was based upon author names, and as such we were confronted with somewhat different problems. I personally think that the name-based approach is more successful, as compared to the currently used methodology, following the keyword 'medical student'. Difficulty in the type of study we conducted was that one needs to have the names of the students, as authors. This allows a bottom up analysis, while the current analysis should be coined as top down analysis.

Therefore, the recall rate in the data collection is low, some 25% of the bottom up analysis, so the conclusions should be modest ...

However, this type of analysis is important, as we need to build up knowledge about various types of research staff across scientific disciplines, in order to be able to compare and analyze HRM policies in academia, in the total picture of governance of science in the light of academic careers.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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'