Author's response to reviews

Title: New non-cognitive procedures for medical applicant selection: a qualitative analysis in one school.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Here are our revisions according to your numbered comments:

Dear Prof. John Yaphe (first reviewer),

Line 6 was corrected to: English for Academic Purposes Coordinator

1. The title was changed into:
"New non-cognitive procedures for medical applicant selection: a qualitative analysis in one school"

2. Lines: 114-128, We have added the rationale, the question and the purpose of the study:
We view our future physician as an expert who will possess medical, clinical and procedural skills as well as professional attitudes. He will have to collect and interpret information, and make decisions. He should be able to effectively communicate with patients, health providers and community and effectively collaborate within a team. We would like to have a lifelong reflective learner who will attain high personal behavior standards. To that end, there is a need to explore ways of eliciting a variety of personal attributes. The question that arises is how can we elicit medical school applicants' NCA's in addition to their cognitive ones?

The aim of the current study is to attempt to use new methods to select medical school applicants. In order to elicit tacit knowledge on the applicant's personality, new procedures that are based on qualitative approaches are added to the existing ones. These procedures are based on positive perspectives embedding in them current assumptions of assessment [17]. Creating a comfortable setting would increase openness under which negative components of personality as well as positive ones would emerge.

3. A clarification of these two terms was put in the following places:

Lines 143-144 "Academic background":
(n=81), (are applicants with a university degree obtained before application to medical school),

Line 683 was corrected as follows:
** Applicants with a university degree obtained before application to medical school

Line 145 The word: "natives" was changed into: "Jewish medical applicants".
Line 450: Jewish applicants.
Line 452: Jewish applicants.
Line 675 (Table 1): Jewish applicants.
Line 783 (Table 5): Jewish applicants.

4. Line 140:
299 participants aged 18-26 years from a northern Israeli medical school took part in the present study. 261 were medical school applicants, and 38 senior medical students.

5. 1st sentence was erased and written in line 184.
Line 192:
Participants were told that the study was independent of, and would have no effect on, the on-going admission process. All participants (n=300), except one gave written informed consent to their participation.

6. We added this sentence to line 537:
We declare that a prior ethical approval for conduct of this study was obtained from the research ethics review board of Shaanan Academic College Ethics Committee.

7. Line 314:
(we mean precise/ sharp)

8. See lines; 114-120

9. Line 497:
This procedure might take a few months work of two faculty members, which is cheap. It is an easily applicable method of evaluation that etc..
Dear Prof. Annette Mercer (second reviewer),

1. More explanations to Table 4:
   Line 751: "it" instead of "he"
   Line 752: We added the word "minus"
   Line 774: We added the calculation: 100% : 7 (categories) = 14.29

We added "Note 2" to Table 4: Line 776

The unit of analysis is a statement. The researcher examines the applicant's statements and classifies them into constructs.
This is "the constant comparative method" (Charmaz, 2006). This method of analysis generates abstract concepts through inductive processes of comparing data with data under strict qualitative rules.
The result is a list of statements classified into constructs for every applicant. Then the numbers and percentages of the statements of every construct are calculated.
This constitutes an applicant's profile.

Thank you very much for your enriching comments.

Sara Katz and Shlomo Vinker