Reviewer's report

Title: Attitudes towards statistics of graduate entry medical students: exploring the perception of difficulty and willingness to engage

Version: 1 Date: 25 November 2013

Reviewer: Yuhai Zhang

Reviewer's report:

The study explored attitudes towards statistics of graduate entry medical students from a variety of backgrounds and focus on understanding the perception of difficulty and willingness to engage. The question posed by the authors is well defined and the methods are appropriate and well described. However, there are some problems should be considered.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. Table 1 and table 2 can be combined into only one table. All characteristics (including educational background) of the participants should be presented and classified with same category (such as age is dichotomized with 25 years uniformly). The univariable statistical analysis also can be presented in this combined table.

2. The authors used multivariable linear regression and Logistic regression to predict component scores and willingness to engage using demographic variables and other educational experiences variables. But the detailed outputs were not presented in the manuscript. Readers may be interested in the detailed influence intensity of every variable, such as OR, 95% CI, P value, etc.

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. Because one student did not give any demographic information, you may exclude him/her from analysis data set. I don't think it will produce the bias owing to the very small elimination. Otherwise, the table looks confused.

2. Table 3 should be reported as mean scores of every items (reverse scoring for reverse items), concordant with other tables, rather than mean responses (agree level).

3. In page 10, the authors state “however, only 24% of them described it as likely that they would take the course”, what’s the criterion for “likely that they would take the course”? neutral or positive views as mentioned in statistical analysis section? why include neutral? These should be described in OUTPUT section.

4. Do you think previous mathematics and statistics education experiences are same in this topic? It may be some different in the effect on attitudes toward statistics.

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