Reviewer's report

Title: Medical student and academic staff perceptions of role models: an analytical cross-sectional study

Version: 4 Date: 26 January 2006

Reviewer: Douglas Curran-Everett

Reviewer's report:

General

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. Pearson correlation. In the Discussion, you acknowledge that the sample size was small. Did you do any goodness-of-fit tests to determine if the observations were consistent with having been drawn from a normal observation? Rather than the parametric Pearson correlation coefficient, I encourage you to use the nonparametric Spearman rho. It will serve you well in this situation.

2. Results. Given your small sample size, it would be helpful to do a power analysis so you can assess differences that are not statistically significant.

3. Table 1. The comparisons among the 2 sets of variables are related in ways that may not be obvious. Please address the issue of multiple comparisons. This is one review, written for a general scientific audience:

Curran-Everett D.
Multiple comparisons: philosophies and illustrations.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. Figure. The information in this figure is better presented in a table.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.