Author's response to reviews

Title: Who Wants to be a Surgeon? A study of 300 first year medical students

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Version: 5  Date: 2 January 2007

Author's response to reviews:

Cover Letter

Manuscript ID 1810004059105256

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Revision of research project:

Who Wants to be a Surgeon? A study on the career intentions of 300 first year medical students.

Revisions from 15/12/2006 (Second draft)

Major Compulsory Revisions

Study Limitations paragraph 3 I have rewritten this paragraph and the sentence referring to it in the results. I have conceded that our sample is not representative of the medical student population as a whole as regards its ethnic make up, and that nationwide extrapolation of our results is not possible as a result. I agree that greater numbers will increase statistical power and have amended the paper throughout (e.g in the 2nd paragraph of the study limitations section) - It was made too complicated and the point is a simple one as you suggest.

Minor Compulsory Revisions

1 Table 2; This has been removed. I agree that it is not necessary - we included it originally to aid our own working through the chi-squared calculations. As you suggest, all the values can be derived from the information in table 1. I have bulked out the text of the results a little to allow for its removal.

2 Table 3; Again, on reconsideration, this table is not necessary. The salient points have been made in the text of the 'Results' section and all of the other information can be derived from table 1.

Discretionary revisions

1 Inconsistencies in grammar;

a] Capitalised letters noticed and amended throughout.

b] Capitalised letters noticed and amended throughout, except: Conclusion, para 4, lines 1-5; '...The concerning conclusion must, therefore, be reached that women simply do not want to be surgeons: None of the sample group had experienced surgery (and could not, therefore, have been put off the idea) and only two out of nearly 200 women expressed concerns about lifestyle, contrary to convincing evidence gathered from women at later stages in their careers.'

This has been left capitalized as it is an independent clause after a colon. Similarly, an incidence of this is left in paragraph 1 of the introduction.
c) Results para 2, line 2; ‘ethnical’ changed to ‘ethnic’, as suggested. No other incidences found, Results para 7, line 3; ‘speciality’ changed to ‘specialty’, as suggested. No other instances found.

2 Regarding subtitle; Subtitle included as suggested.

3 Results penultimate para, line 1; ‘apparent’ dropped as suggested and ‘different’ changed to ‘difference’, as I believe, was meant to be suggested.

4 Conclusion para 2; The word ‘confounding’ is chosen as our results echo those of the papers cited here. See ‘Introduction’ paragraph 2 for more on this.

5 Table 1; ‘Actual’ removed and ‘Frequency’ changed to ‘Numbers’, as suggested.

The second reviewer has not made any further suggestions.

Many thanks

Thomas Fysh