Reviewer's report

Title: Nursing students motivation toward their studies - a survey study

Version: 1 Date: 22 November 2007

Reviewer: Willy Lens

Reviewer's report:

General

The introductory discussion of students’ motivation is too limited and certainly much too superficial: for example, why is the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation referred to, but not the - for nursing students probably more interesting - distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic goals (also from SDT); why is the approach-avoidance dimension in Achievement Goal Theory not discussed.

A major problem with this study is that the authors do not discuss their measure of motivation at all (which type of motivation was measured? What is the reliability or internal consistency of the questionnaire? Did the authors check the coding reliability of the content analysis of the answers to the open-ended question?

No indication is given about the number of participants for each of the six measurement moments; How may students participated in each of the six semesters? If this number is high enough I would discuss these data separately (repeated measur). No information is given about the statistical technique used to test differences nor about the results of the tests (t or F and p values).

Why only an overall mean score for men (5.8) and women (6.8) and why is this difference not tested? In almost all studies that I know girls score higher than boys, so this finding is not unusual. I would look for gender difference in each semester.

I wonder if a mean age of 27 for nursing students is normal in Sweden.

Is it correct - as said on p. 3 - that it was found that only 8 out of 76 students dropped-out? How many students dropped out in this sample?

I like the data in Tables 2 & 3 but I would do much more if I would know the content of the items to measure the strength of motivation.

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

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

See below

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
None

What next?: Reject because scientifically unsound

Level of interest: An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.