Reviewer's report

Title: The relationship between job satisfaction, burnout and turnover intention among specialist physicians from urban state-owned medical institutions in Hubei, China: a cross-sectional study

Version: 2 Date: 2 May 2011

Reviewer: Jean-Karl Soler

Reviewer's report:

Dear Editor,

I would recommend that this article be accepted for publication, since it is a very interesting and well written piece. However, it requires both major and minor revisions, before being accepted, in my opinion.

Dear Authors,

my congratulations for this work, and paper. I have some suggestions for it to be improved.

Major compulsory revisions

1. In the methodology, a sample size of 1445 individuals is mentioned. This sample is necessary for what test, and to what power?

2. The CPJSQ instrument was not available for me to read. It is not available in the international literature. Furthermore, a questionnaire with 58 specific questions seems excessive, especially since it is summarised in 5 output variables. How is this justified? How has it been validated, externally?

3. The MBI was extensively modified, down from 22 to 15 questions, and a 5 point as against 7 point likert was used. How can one justify such a major change and still call the result of the measurement "burnout"? How was this entirely new instrument externally, rather than internally, validated? Why were average scores used, rather than cut-offs (high/medium/low burnout) as recommended by the original author, Maslach? In fact, the cronbach's scores you found for EE, DP and PA sub-scores are lower than we found for the European burnout study in GPs.

4. Job turnover was tested by three questions - how was this instrument validated? Was it externally validated (e.g. how many doctors who score high actually leave their work in short, medium and long term?)

5. Many respondents are classified as receiving low levels of education. Are they really doctors, or are some of these people nurses or orderlies? If so, then should the title be changed? 12% of the study group were "technical assistants" for example. Why have you studied non-doctors with doctors, if this is really the
case?

6. The statistics seem sound, and are impressive, and the authors are competent in describing them in the methodology. Well done, but they should still be reviewed by a competent statistician.

7. How have you managed to get a 95% response rate? A 33% to 50% response rate for a questionnaire is more usual.

Minor revisions

1. Many variables were measured, including demographic and income variables. Some were not analysed, or the analysis was not elaborated in the discussion. Some variables were not measured - in our study we found that alcohol consumption and smoking were important variables.

2. ANOVA and Pearson coefficients were used. Were the numerical variables interval or ordinal, and were they normal?

3. Most of the text on page 9 is about methodology, and should go to the methodology section

4. On page 11, end of first paragraph, you state that a group of respondents complained about salaries - why is this not a measured variable (maybe it is simply an observation during interviews)? If it is simply an observation, you should explain how it was observed, for the reader to understand its validity.

Discretionary revisions

1. Please check table 2. I believe the Pearson coefficient title should be for column three (numbers).

2. Please check Table 1. This is not explained well in the discussion. Why did you only analyse two variables in this table? Why not include more?

3. Figure 1 should be in the main text, not after the references. It is a very nice diagram, but it should be fully labelled and explained.

Thank you for writing this competent article, based on a well-conducted study, and for asking me to review it. I hope these comments are useful

regards

Jean Karl Soler

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.
Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'