Reviewer's report

Title: Physicians' perceptions of quality of care, professional autonomy, and job satisfaction in Canada, Norway, and the United States

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Reviewer: Jeralynn Cossman

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The authors’ question is well defined, but there are methodological and data problems, as listed below. Limitations are not clearly stated, at least not the limitations of which I am most concerned. Citations are appropriate and the abstract is fine, but the data and methodological limitations undermine all else.

Introduction

The author(s) state there are three important reasons for their study. The first two are well documented and they use some citations; however, even in a globalized workforce, physicians might be the least likely to cross international boundaries in search of work. Without a citation, this assertion should not be made.

Methods

Three survey databases are used. The US data is three or four years older than the Norwegian and Canadian data. This is a substantial temporal gap and undermines the argument that the differences across countries are from public versus private health care systems.

Results

Table 2 is incredibly awkward. I would strongly recommend Z-scores or averages being presented rather than tallies of responses.

Table 3 is barely addressed. Why present three different dependent variables but not discuss them individually? Then, in Table 4, analyses are done differently by country instead of simply recoding job satisfaction into a comparable measure across countries.

As a reader, I am not convinced of the time order. Doctors who are more satisfied provide higher quality of care – or doctors who are able to provide high quality of care are more satisfied in their jobs? The same could be said for each of these dependent variables.

Discussion

The author(s) cite several articles on burnout and satisfaction, but then follow it up with assertions without citations (page 10, first full paragraph).

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.