Reviewer's report

Title: Career-Success Scale - a new instrument to assess young physicians' academic career steps

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Reviewer: Olaf G Aasland

Reviewer's report:

An interesting paper on an important topic. However, I have some concerns:

- Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Many doctors, at least in my country, choose an academic career at a later stage, after some, often many, years in clinical work. This should at least be accounted for in the discussion. An interesting exercise could therefore be to try the CSS on a group of senior doctors.

2. We also often operate with combined clinical and academic positions. How is this in Switzerland?

3. I miss some information on the labour market for doctors in Switzerland. How many academic positions are available? Is there a shortage of academic doctors?

4. As shown in figure 1, the CSS scale is strongly skewed and not parametric. In many of the analyses (tables 2 and 4) it is treated as a parametric, continuous variable. Wouldn't it be more appropriate to use non-parametric tests, for instance Kruskal-Wallis, to test group differences, and dichotomisation and logistic regression to explore multivariate relationships?

5. An even better alternative, if the ambition is to present the CSS as an international and validated instrument, to reconstruct it into a scale with parametric properties. This would certainly make it much more appealing.

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'