Reviewer's report

Title: Capacity of Middle Management in Health Care Organizations for Working with People--A Case of Slovenian Hospitals

Version: 2 Date: 27 September 2012

Reviewer: Diana Jamal

Reviewer's report:

- The authors may wish to revise the abstract to ensure that it fully describes the paper particularly the methods section. I would have liked to find information on sample size, response rate, etc
- I found the introduction a bit short, it did not really present the case for this particular paper.
- The objective is not well articulated. In fact, it is currently in the methods section although a better place would have been at the end of the introduction. The phrasing of the objective can be improved as it is a bit vague. The use of the phrase “identify the current situation” can be changed to “assess current practices influencing leader-employee relationships”. The word “some fields” is also vague and needs to be more specific in describing the context of the study.
- The section on sampling is informative but it is a bit difficult to follow. The authors may wish to consider summarizing this information in a table or a figure.
- When it comes to the survey tool, was it piloted prior to data collection? Was it translated to the country’s native language?
- It is commendable that the ministry of health supported such a study but did an ethics committee review the protocol? The authors did not mention a consent form? Were respondents informed of their rights as participants in this study? Were they fully aware of the voluntary nature of the study or of their rights to anonymity and confidentiality? Did they place the surveys in sealed envelopes prior to returning them? What measures did the authors take to protect the rights of respondents?
- In the results section, the authors use the term predictors to summarize findings in table 6. I do not think that is the appropriate term in this case as this table summarizes findings from a correlation not a regression model.
- The results section is well developed and comprehensive but I do have some reservations on the discussion as it does not include a well developed section on study limitations. The authors talk about representative sampling and the response rate but not about the limitations of cross sectional studies, the issue of non response bias, or the fact that the data was collected in 2008 and might be slightly outdated. The authors may wish to acknowledge such issues in the next version of the manuscript.
- In the conclusion section, the authors highlight the importance of encouraging
the accreditation of quality postgraduate programs. Although this is undoubtedly important, I do not see how it stems from study results.

- The authors may wish to refer to the instructions to authors when it comes to table placement, line spacing, pagination, etc.
- The paper could benefit from some grammatical corrections

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests