Reviewer’s report

Title: A framework for outcome-level evaluation of in-service training of health care workers

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Reviewer: Mohsin Sidat

Reviewer’s report:

Dear Authors,

The article presents the methods used to develop a framework for outcome-level evaluation of in-service training of health care workers, but also results of its use/development. It is indeed a very interesting framework and in my opinion include all possible domains of outcome-level evaluation making the paper worth publishing (with great potential to be referenced/cited afterwards). On the other hand, the topic of the article is of utmost interest in the field of "Human Resources for Health" as most in-service health workers training is not evaluated at outcome-level and evidence is lacking regarding effects of in-service training at different levels/domains, including in health effects of patients/populations.

However, the article, by trying to present both the methods and results used to develop the framework in simultaneous way, creating difficulties in clearly understanding the procedures as well as the findings. There is lack of chronological coherence of events/procedures used to develop the framework and subsequently evaluate/pilot its usefulness. It is not clear what was done firstly, secondly and thirdly, etc.... Even if there were cyclical iterative process used as explained by the authors it is important to describe with greater clarity the methods used to develop the framework and the contribution of different methods (literature review, key informant interviews and feedback from pilot use of the framework) in shaping the final evaluation framework that the authors of the paper developed. The way the article is written creates difficulties in understanding to what extent the literature review informed the development of the framework and/or to what extent the findings from the interviews helped in developing the framework. Similarly, to what extent the pilot of the framework helped to get to final version of the framework? Lack of answers to these questions compromises the main aim of the article which was to present the methods used to develop a framework for outcome-level evaluation of in-service training of health care workers, but also results of its use/development. Thus, in my opinion, these major limitations I mentioned here regarding this article compromise its scientific merit and its acceptability for publication.

Thus, I would suggest the authors of the article to do a major revision of it and structure the article in a way that the whole methodological process used to develop the framework is chronologically and coherently presented including its finalization after piloting of it. I deeply regret to say that the article is not
scientifically adequate to published and major revision is necessary.

Apart of the comments above I have also made some comments in the paper (but because of the reasons above I stopped comments half-way as the paper needs major revision)

Hope that the above feedback helps in improving your paper and lookforward for the revised version of the article.

Kind regards

Mohsin Sidat MD, MSc, PhD

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**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.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests

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