Reviewer’s report

Title: Reliability of Multiple Mini-Interviews and traditional interviews within and between institutions: a study of five California medical schools

Version: 0 Date: 09 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Ian Wilson

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting paper, but I am concerned that the results are over interpreted. It is confused somewhat by the different measures used in the MMI and TI groups. In one Cronbach’s alpha is used while the other uses r. this is potentially confusing for readers.

My main concern is the interpretation of the results. The correlations between interviewer ratings of TI groups range from 0.07 to 0.44. While these may be statistically significant they are not practically significant.

Much is made of the ICCs. 0.27 is considered a poor ICC and 0.47 is only fair. Using these values to justify keeping the TI is inappropriate.

It is mentioned that some applicants undertook more than one interview. comparison of scores in different interviews would be very illuminating. the statement that most applicants are not interviewed needs expansion as this is not the case in all countries. what impact does this have on interviewing? does it affect the homogeneity of the applicants being interviewed?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?
2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?
3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?
4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?
5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?
6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal