Reviewer’s report

Title: A cross-sectional examination of psychological distress, positive mental health and their predictors in medical students in their clinical clerkships

Version: 0 Date: 18 Apr 2017

Reviewer: Karen Scott

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review your manuscript. On the whole it is interesting and mostly well written.

The Introduction provides a good summary of the relevant literature. In the final paragraph the first sentence could be clarified and an explanation given for 'dispositional mindfulness'.

The Methods and Results are well written.

The Discussion is disappointing compared to the previous sections. Rather than just summarising the findings, it needs to discuss them in relation to the literature, especially that which is presented in the Introduction. This only really occurs in the sub-section 'Prevalence of psychological distress and positive mental health'.

Similarly, in the Conclusion you make reference to Scandinavian studies, yet you don't compare the findings with these in the Discussion so it is unclear which studies, or which factors are similar.

The findings presented in the Discussion are often at odds with those presented in the Results. For example, 'mindfulness skill of acting with awareness' - in the Results you write that this is inversely correlated with determinants for psychological distress but in the Discussion you write that it is the strongest determinant of psychological distress. All other references to the findings in the Discussion need revision and it would be useful to give the direction of associations.

The final paragraph before 'Strengths and limitations' needs clarification, as does the first sentence of 'Strengths and limitations'.

The English expression in the Discussion needs review, as does the existing referencing.

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.
Unable to assess

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

Yes

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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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