Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) for General Practice Training selection in Australia: Interviewers’ motivation

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 02 Jun 2017

**Reviewer:** Laura Hopson

**Reviewer's report:**

This paper through a mixed methods model (although this is primarily a qualitative study) attempts to define the motivations for interviewers to participate in the Australian MMI program to select post graduate trainees. While not explicitly stated, the authors imply that recruitment of interviewers is posing challenges. I would appreciate a clearer statement of whether this is truly the issue that they are trying to address. Explicitly addressing this might also broaden the applicability of this study to other domains and similarly resource intensive programs such as oral board examinations for some American specialties and medical school OSCEs. One significant limitation about the paper as presented is that it feels very limited in scope and evokes a bit of "so what" as it is currently framed. This could be addressed by reframing of the paper to include an explicit statement of why this matters as well as how these results could be applied to address some of the implied challenges of recruitment for the MMI and other similar types of examinations.

The qualitative portion of the study utilizing Framework analysis appears to be well done from the data analysis perspective and use an appropriate methodology. However, I will acknowledge that I am not an expert in the subtleties of qualitative analysis methods and will defer to someone with more expertise on the finer points. I would also like the authors to briefly elaborate on how their interview/qualitative data was obtained and the interview process. How were the interviewees selected? Was a structured interview performed? If so, how was it developed? (page 5 methods)

The rationale for the inclusion of the quantitative survey which appears to contain primarily demographic information was not clear. Questions such as how these large group demographics relate to the subgroup of 40 which completed the interview were also not clear. Did the interview subgroup reflect the demographics of the group as a whole?

The writing itself is clear and flows well. Background information is appropriate. I have included some additional minor suggestions below.

At this point, I think the manuscript requires significant revisions to the framing of the question, its importance, and the descriptions of the methods before it could be considered for publication.
Minor edits

Page 2 Abstract background - include a statement of why this matters

Page 2 abstract conclusion - how is this knowledge to be used?

Page 3 Line 27 Need a citation for the sentence ending with "…MMI offers a useful format to select junior doctors for specialty training."

Page 3 Lines 34-37 It sounds as though this MMI is set up as multiple short unstructured interviews but I was not entirely clear. One of the aspects of the MMI as originally described was to structure these interactions to avoid only have "first impressions" and have interviewees assessed on task performance as well as responses to structured questions. Would suggest clarifying the phrasing in this section as to how the Australian MMI is structured.

Page 3 Lines 45-59 Add in a sentence as to why we need to understand motivations as on the next page it is implied but not explicitly stated that there is a shortage.

Page 4 Lines 16-19 Can you place these numbers in context? Are centers reporting difficulty recruiting or staffing the MMI?

Page 5 Line 55 "…with most interviewers rotating between one or more MMI stations" Awkward phrasing to describe interviewer experience. This statement seems to just say that the interviewers actually participated. Suggest either refining to indicate their experience with different stations or eliminating.

Page 6 Lines 9-11 It would be useful to clarify whether the "senior admin" and "supervisor" designations are medical personnel

Page 7 Line 19 Recommend minor rephrasing for clarity perhaps "Forty [MMI] interviewers were interviewed [by the study team] from the five NACs…"

Quotes in the results sections appear to effectively illustrate concepts.

Page 13 Line 17-19 Limitations can be fleshed out with 1-2 additional phrases. Not only were interviewees volunteers but did they reflect the population doing the interviews.

Conclusion - see comments above to provide some real world implications of the findings.

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

No
Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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

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