Reviewer's report

Title: Medical students: what educational resources are they using?

Version: 1 Date: 07 May 2018

Reviewer: Susan F. Smith

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting manuscript in which the authors explore the resources utilised by undergraduate and graduate medical students at two universities in Sydney. The rationale is clearly explained and, indeed, the whole manuscript is written succinctly and with clarity.

Consideration of the following specific points would allow the authors to enhance the manuscript.

Introduction

The introduction and rationale for the study are clear and comprehensive.

Methods

The method used for data collection is appropriate. It would be helpful for the exact questions asked to be included in the manuscript.

Results and Discussion

A 33% response rate is good for this type of survey, but because the survey was delivered online it is possible that a disproportionate number of the respondents like to work online and are more likely to make use of online resources. This needs to be discussed. Those less enamoured of online resources may be less likely to respond to an online survey.

The authors have aggregated their Likert scale data and presented it as means and SDs. However Likert scales are ordinal. There is no guarantee that each person rates the difference between each pair of points on the scale identically. Neither can it be assumed that different individuals perceive the intervals in the same way to each other. It is therefore debatable whether these data should aggregated and meaned as if they were true numbers.

In addition, by aggregating data it is no longer possible to see the spread of the responses which, for this type of survey can be very illuminating. This point should be discussed and the decision to use mean data justified. In addition some illustrations of data distribution might be helpful.
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.

Yes

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 am able to assess the statistics

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