Reviewer’s report

Title: Student motivation to learn: Is self-belief the key to transition and first year performance in an undergraduate health professions program?

Version: 1 Date: 28 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Chris Roberts

Reviewer's report:

The authors have made several changes that make the most of the data that they have. The two research questions have been more clearly defined, and the claims of the associations in the predictive validity student appropriately toned down. In terms of the research questions both are phrased in line 125-132 p 5 as closed yes/no questions. Question one needed a bit more work, to define the cognitive/non cognitive nature of the educational score. The interview is described adequately. This is would be in line with much of admissions research cf (Patterson et al Med Teacher 2018). The authors need to just check that consistency has been used throughout included in the tables.

In the intro p3 line 70, the reference in perhaps not so recent given it is 2019.

In the Discussion line 248, which researchers are the authors referring to. Those in reference 27 or themselves?

In the discussion line 244-- it states "there was no relationship between academic entry scores... is this the combined educational/interview score?

I remain unconvinced that the final conclusion is complete... "Consideration of individualised follow-up for students with lowered levels may be appropriate, to 334 facilitate improved student motivation and subsequent study success." It seems equally plausible that some of the first year courses are demotivating, and need improving. to be appealing to high and low performing students?

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.

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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Acceptable

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