Reviewer's report

Title: Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL): Skills Lab Tutors' Experiences and Motivation - Results of a Qualitative Interview Study

Version: 0 Date: 18 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Harish Thampy

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper relating to PAL in the skills-training context. Overall the study has been well conducted with very detailed analysis. The paper as a whole is very clear and readable though I have made some comments below.

Context section - was slightly confused as to what stage the skills-tutors are. It states that the skills curriculum is in the final year yet the next sentence says that Y3-5 students are recruited as tutors. Am I right in thinking then that a Y3 student could be peer-tutoring a Y5 student? In table 1, their 'areas of application as a skills tutor' - can this be explained - did peer-tutors sign up to only teach skills on specific speciality areas / was this allocated to them (in either case, why).

Much of the findings in most of the themes I would argue are not that unique and indeed have been reported in a range of literature relating to PAL eg motivations, teaching modalities/approaches, benefits of PAL etc. I think this paper does however contain some unique findings that are specific to the context of skills-teaching though this could be elaborated/ made more explicit for eg I would have liked to have seen more how peer-tutors feel about teaching procedural skills that they themselves have only just learnt with limited real-world clinical opportunity to put into practice - often skill-based teaching requires the necessary clinical experience to offer tips/advice etc and I wonder how these peer-tutors found this / overcame this. There is one such quote on page 13 and 17 but I think this needs more detail as this is the main area of unique reporting and perhaps brought higher up the order of themes.
Minor issues:

Word choice: employing p3 line 7 - suggests financial remuneration which is often not the cause (from my own experience, though I do note in this study the student-tutors were employed). P5 line 1 semi-standardized -> semi-structured?

P6 line 46 duplication of 'to'

P16 ln 56 said to -> said they

P19 line 24, 'though' not needed.

P 22 ln 49 und-> and

P24 ln 5 'eye-level' -> matched levels

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

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