Reviewer’s report

Title: The association between health professionals’ international experience and the academic output of their students in Harbin, China

Version: 0 Date: 16 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Joseph Kolars

Reviewer's report:

The authors are to be commended for taking on an important question that is of scientific interest to the education community. However, there are a number of issues that should be addressed to make this work more understandable to the international community. Some of these may be due to language which might be improved by careful attention from a native English speaker. I attach an annotated version of the paper where I’ve tried to point out some of these along with items that need better explanation. Overall, the issues that need to be addressed include:

1. Replacement of the word 'impact' with 'association'. You cannot claim causality for the observations you are making at this juncture.

2. There are a number of limitations that should also be factored in including the bias that may result from self reporting (i.e. the fact that data is captured by a questionnaire) and the fact that there may be other factors in the mentors that resulted in the associated improvements in their mentees other than their time overseas.

3. Reconciling the results with the discussion is confusing in that some aspects suggest that the association is not very strong or missing.

4. The 100% participation rate while guaranteeing anonymity needs to be explained.

Careful attention from an expert in statistical analysis is required.

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.
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 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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