Reviewer’s report

Title: Gender-based differences in letters of recommendation written for ophthalmology residency Applicants

Version: 0 Date: 22 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Peter J. Carek

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript covers an interesting topic. The issue of bias in letters of recommendation is important and needs further study. The study would have been more practical if the letters were interpreted by program directors rather than a computer program. This study may serve as an initial review and the authors should recommend further study using interpretations by actual program directors.

BACKGROUND

The second paragraph of the discuss section should be moved to the background.

METHODS

Further description regarding how words were classified would assist with the interpretation of the results.

The study is limited as it only addresses a single discipline.

RESULTS

A brief explanation regarding why subgroup analysis was not pursued is needed. Could this explain the other results?

DISCUSSION

While the computer program generated differences in the words selected by gender, are the groupings important to program directors?
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.

No

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:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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