Reviewer’s report

Title: Assessing the preparedness of Foundation Year 1 (FY1) doctors during the transition from medical school to the Foundation Training Programme

Version: 5  Date: 05 Mar 2020

Reviewer: Catherine Matheson-Monnet

Reviewer's report:

While the premise of this article is interesting, it does not add anything of significance to the literature. The writers do not justify in any manner their choice of statistical tools and make no mention of the limitations to the t-test; they appear not to understand Cronbach's alpha as seen by their attribution, without further explanation, of negative values for alpha [lines 450-1] to "data error" rather than recognising the need the recode the items in the opposite direction. The numbers involved when comparing those who had attended Yorkshire medical schools with those who had not, are simply too small to justify using t-tests

There are various assertions in the text [such as the claim that length of scale has an impact on the reliability of a Likert item which is presented with no justification or reference] and some errors of fact, such as the claim that the University of Liverpool has "recently" adopted a PBL approach when, in fact, Liverpool has been doing so since around 2001.

As this submission is now in its sixth iteration, I am hesitant to suggest rejection. It does however need a thorough revision to ensure appropriate statistical tests are used and that they are justified in their use [the writers could usefully use Pallant's SPSS Survival Guide for this]; proper account needs to be taken of the fact that they are submitting to an international journal and that terms specific to UK or England need to be explained. They also need to use the correct terminology. There is reference at various points to "the deanery" while deaneries ceased to exist in 2013, following the Health and Social Care Act of 2012 which replaced them with Local Education and Training Boards [LETBs] which, in the case of the region in question, is termed Health Education England Yorkshire and the Humber, not Deanery.

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 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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