Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Impact of an online writing aid tool for writing a randomized trial report: The COBWEB (COsort Based WEB tool) randomized controlled trial

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 9 August 2015

**Reviewer:** Patrick MM Bossuyt

**Reviewer’s report:**

I want to thank the authors for considering my suggestions, and for modifying the manuscript accordingly. I felt that the reasoning and the reporting flow more naturally and more convincingly.

There is now more detail in the statistical methods section.

Unfortunately, this also makes clear that the second part of the analysis selected does not fit the experimental design used.

Actually, there are two (sets of) analyses. The first is the estimated main effect of the intervention, for which the authors have used a hierarchical model.

In the second set of analyses the authors rely on simple Student’s t-test statistics to compare the effect of the intervention on the respective domains.

This ignores the experimental structure completely. Here I believe this is unfortunate, and unnecessary.

This reviewer is aware that the list of authors contains a number of trained biostatisticians, but their track record is more built on conventional randomized trials in clinical medicine, less so on more complex multifactor factorial experiments, as the one developed here. In actual fact, this study is closer to traditional randomized experiments in social sciences or in agriculture than to clinical studies of interventions in patients.

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

No competing interests.