Reviewer's report

Title: Doctoral Level Research and Training Capacity in the Social Determinants of Health at universities and higher education institutions in India, China, Oman and Vietnam: A survey of needs

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Reviewer: Marsha Sarah Orgill

Reviewer's report:

Paper title: Doctoral level research and training capacity in the Social Determinants of Health in ARCADE RSDH partner institutions in India, china, Oman and Vietnam: A survey of needs

I found the paper much easier to read this time around and I have some comments that need to be addressed, I do not foresee that they will require much work on the part of the authors, rather just some additional information. I feel though as if this is the first time I can provide high level comments as the paper is now well worked through.

My opinion is I think the paper can be published after these comments have been addressed:

Comment 1 : Recommendation and action:

Table 1 has words missing in the PhD students block 'suggestions to improve the XXXX?

Comment 2 :

Recommendation and action:

Please include the number of participants and respondents for both the qualitative and quantitative components under 'data collection and sampling'. It is only mentioned in the abstract and in the Table 1. Please tabulate in the methodology section for the Reader, the Reader shouldn't need to tabulate for themselves
Comment 3: Please provide clarity for the Reader

Is it the case that all partner 'institutions' are universities. I suspect not all partner 'institutions' surveyed were universities hence the use of the term 'institutions'? Either way I think it would be good to make this clear to the reader. Also please note to the Reader if the partner is in fact a Specific Faculty in the University or a Specific Department, for example 'College of Medicine' is used in on the quotes.

Recommendation and action:

- Please see the paper titled "Assessment of capacity for Health Policy and Systems Research and Analysis in seven African universities: results from the CHEPSAA project" by Mirzoev et al. (2017) Health Policy and Planning (29). See under the methods section, just above Figure 1. how this author described each partner that was a participant in the research. I think you could easily describe each of your partners in this way too.

Please do so. If you sampled the whole University then please make this clear.

- Please note that the conclusion that is written in your abstract says the research will be relevant for other universities - from this I would infer that all partners are universities? Please ensure conclusion words match rest of text

- Please check that the title of your paper is then consistent with how you decide to describe the 'institutions'.

Rationale:

- This helps to situate the findings for the Reader - at the moment I can't really situate the findings within a broader context, institutions set up only for research are quite different from universities in needs and assets available.

Comment 4: In the discussion section it is mentioned that BNU is the only university that offers Social Sciences - this again raises the question for me if you sampled a specific Faculty for this work or you mean that across all Faculties in all universities nobody except BNU offers social sciences? I suspect you sampled particular faculties? Although it is not clear to me.
- Library facilities, lack of internet, inadequate reading material? As major challenges raises a contextual question for me - are these under resourced universities? Or are these problems particular to research 'institutions'?

Recommendation and action:

- Please provide 1 or 2 sentences giving some contextual information that allows the Reader to understand why lack of reading material or lack of internet might be a problem - things in the context you may consider to be relevant.

- You may want to include these sentences under participants or rather add them in the findings section so the Reader can situate the findings directly.

Comment 5: It is not clear to me why you refer to participants as male student or female student before a quote in the findings section? You did not as I understand it apply a gender lens during tool development and data collection? Sometimes the terms are used and other times it is not, consistency is needed and one needs to decide whether the use of male and female is relevant in this paper.

- I do however recognise the one quote about parents and respect for children study was mentioned by many females and supported by a PI so that comment is usefully shown to be predominantly female, the others are not qualified in this way.

- Recommendation and action:

Discuss within your team whether labelling quotes as male / female has any value within the context of your paper.

Comment 6: A suggestion to think about - no need to action.

In the discussion section you give ideas for increasing the availability of courses for SDH students - would it not also be possible to draw courses from other faculties within the same university and/or to draw on courses from other local universities to supplement and support
SDH training? And if not all partners are universities then research institutions that only do research could possibly collaborate with local (or northern) universities.

Recommendation:

This is just food for thought and a suggestion

**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Acceptable

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Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

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