OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
- More motivations for all involved roles in the review process
- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://sites.kowsarpub.com/kowsar/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

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Peer Review Report for "Scope and Challenges of Self-Directed Learning in Undergraduate Medical Education: A Systematic Review"

Author(s): Archana Chirag Buch, Hetal Rathod , Mukta Durgesh Naik

Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 6 Mar 2021
Revised Date: 8 May 2021
Accepted Date: 10 May 2021

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 17 Apr 2021

Dear EIC,
Thanks for the submission, comments for the authors:
- have you done hand searching of key journals and follow up reference list of individual studies?
- how do you assess the quality of studies?
- pleases explain the method used to combine studies?
Thanks.

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (0) 24 Apr 2021

Dear Author,
Your article is reviewed by the reviewers carefully. According to their comments, this document needs minor revision. Please follow their comments as requested.
Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

REPLY TO RVIEWER COMMENTS:

Thankyou for your comments. We have tried answering all the queries to our best knowledge. Kindly check. Search strategy and data extraction have been highlighted in the manuscript in an attempt to reply to comment/question raised by the reviewer.

Q: Have you done hand searching of key journals and follow up reference list of individual studies?

Ans. The hand searching of key journals could not be done as the data search was done during ongoing COVID 19 pandemic which made it difficult to visit places of physical journal facilities like library.

The focus during data search was on the articles assessed through the databases as mentioned in the search strategy. We also screened the articles appearing on the side panel (stating similar articles on this topic). Simultaneously cross referencing was also done.

Q: How you assessed quality of studies?

Ans: The articles were selected from journals indexed in databases like Scopus, PubMed and google scholar. The quality of the studies was assessed based on its research question, study design, inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The quality check of studies requires checklists for a specific type of study design. since our study is more of descriptive type, we focused on various methods of SDL, their advantages, and limitations along with its utility in implementation of SDL in undergraduate medical curriculum.

The classical method of risk of bias for selected articles done in systematic review could not be applied in our study.

Q: Pleases explain the method used to combine studies?

Ans: Since this is a descriptive systematic review, no specific statistical method was used to combine studies. They were judged on common advantages, disadvantages of the methods and based on SDL or SRL.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision (1)** 10 May 2021

Dear Author,
The document is reviewed carefully by the reviewers. According to their comments and your revisions as requested, this manuscript is accepted.
Thanks.