

## PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form ([see an example](#)) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below. Some articles will have been accepted based in part or entirely on reviews undertaken for other BMJ Group journals. These will be reproduced where possible.

### ARTICLE DETAILS

<b>TITLE (PROVISIONAL)</b>	Specialty choice in times of economic crisis: cross-sectional survey of Spanish medical students
<b>AUTHORS</b>	Harris, Jeffrey; López-Valcárcel, Beatriz; Rubio, Vicente; Pérez, Patricia

### VERSION 1 - REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Anna García-Altés Observatori del Sistema de Salut de Catalunya Agència d'Informació, Avaluació i Qualitat en Salut (AIAQS) Roc Boronat 81-95, 2on pis Barcelona 08005
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	25-Sep-2012

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>The paper is excellent: it addresses a very interesting topic, the statistical methods used are impeccable, and the conclusions reached are policy relevant.</p> <p>My only extremely minor comment is that the expressions "Family and Community Practice" and "FCP" are not used homogeneously in the text; it should be revised.</p>
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Dr Jeremie Lefevre (MD-PhD) Associate Professor General and digestive Surgery Department Hôpital Saint-Antoine France
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	02-Jan-2013

<b>THE STUDY</b>	<p>The major problem is the absence of previous results to compare with the published data in the present work, While it is clearly stated in the title that the influence of the economic crisis is evaluated in the paper... the % of response rate must be cited in the abstract. Moreover, 25% response rate is too low for allowing a generalization of the results. Some references of european countries on this topic should be also quoted in the paper.</p>
<b>RESULTS &amp; CONCLUSIONS</b>	<p>The details concerning the patients should be placed in the results sections and not in the subject and methods.</p> <p>The details of figure 2 construction should be removed from the result section and placed either in the methods section or in the legend of figure 2.</p>

	<p>I find very hard to understand the figure 2 even with the long explanations given by the authors in the results section.</p> <p>why the variable gender has not been tested in the overall population and only in the model 3 ?</p> <p>Author should also comment on their low response rate in the discussion which is a major limitation of this work.</p>
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### VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

**Reviewer: Anna García-Altés**

The paper is excellent: it addresses a very interesting topic, the statistical methods used are impeccable, and the conclusions reached are policy relevant.

1. My only extremely minor comment is that the expressions "Family and Community Practice" and "FCP" are not used homogeneously in the text; it should be revised.

*Response:*

In the revised version, we have consistently used "Family and Community Medicine" or FCM throughout the text.

**Reviewer: Dr. Jeremie Lefevre**

1. The major problem is the absence of previous results to compare with the published data in the present work. While it is clearly stated in the title that the influence of the economic crisis is evaluated in the paper...

*Response:*

We have expanded upon this limitation of our study in the subsection of the Discussion section entitled "Study Limitations" (page 19). We include additional citations to a study in Ireland carried out in 2009 and a study in Spain carried out in 2010.

2. The % of response rate must be cited in the abstract.

*Response:*

The response rate now appears in Results within the abstract (page 2).

3. Moreover, 25% response rate is too low for allowing a generalization of the results.

*Response:*

We now include additional paragraphs on the survey response rate and potential non-response bias in the subsection "Study Limitations" within the Discussion section (pp. 18-19). See our Response (above) to point #14 raised by the Managing Editor.

4. Some references of European countries on this topic should be also quoted in the paper.

*Response:*

In the revised version (page 3), we cite additional references from several countries, including Ireland, Germany, France, and Spain. One newly cited study from France (Lefevre, 2010) was authored by the reviewer. (We apologize to the reviewer for failing to identify this study in our initial literature review.) Another study from France (Gaucher, 2012) appeared quite recently. The newly cited study from Spain (Mena, 2012) was recently accepted for publication.

5. The details concerning the patients should be placed in the results sections and not in the subject and methods.

*Response:*

The relevant information has been moved from the Subjects and Methods section to a new subsection entitled "Descriptive Statistics" (page 11) within the Results section.

6. The details of figure 2 construction should be removed from the result section and placed either in the methods section or in the legend of figure 2.

*Response:*

We have moved the details of Figure 2 construction to the caption for that figure.

7. I find very hard to understand the figure 2 even with the long explanations given by the authors in the results section.

*Response:*

Concomitantly, we have shortened and clarified the text interpretation of Figure 2 (pages 12-13).

8. Why the variable gender has not been tested in the overall population and only in the model 3?

*Response:*

We include additional clarifying text (page 11), explaining that we tested gender and all other attributes in every model, but show only the significant results in Table 2.

9. Author should also comment on their low response rate in the discussion which is a major limitation of this work.

*Response:*

We now include additional paragraphs on the survey response rate and potential non-response bias in the subsection "Study Limitations" within the Discussion section (pp. 18-19). See our Response (above) to point #14 raised by the Managing Editor.

#### **VERSION 2 – REVIEW**

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Dr Jeremie Lefevre (MD, PhD) Department of General and Digestive Surgery Hopital Saint antoine France  No conflict of interest to report
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	16-Jan-2013

- The reviewer completed the checklist but made no further comments.