

## REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-55671

**Title:** Occurrence and determinants of MSS among health care students in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

### Recommendation:

Accept as it is .....

**Accept after minor revision.....**

Accept after major revision .....

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality			✓	
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity			✓	
Significance			✓	

Reviewer Name: Dr. Sudheer Aluru

### *Detailed Reviewer's Report*

This is a well-designed cross-sectional study addressing an important and often under-researched issue—health anxiety and medically unexplained somatic distress among medical students. The manuscript is generally well-written, methodologically sound, and relevant to the field. However, several areas require clarification, refinement, and expansion before publication.

### Major comments

1. The terms *Medical Students' Syndrome (MSS)*, *health anxiety*, and *illness anxiety disorder* are used inconsistently. A clear operational definition and differentiation should be provided early in the manuscript.
2. Table 1 includes "Family history" but the label is ambiguous (of illness? mental health?). Clarify.
3. The study uses a single medical college in Jeddah. The justification for its representativeness is weak. Please discuss limitations regarding generalizability to other regions or institutions.
4. No justification is provided for treating GPA as a continuous variable without adjustment for grading system variability.
5. Ethical approval is mentioned, but approval number and consent procedures should be clearly stated.

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### Minor Comments

1. In Abstract - Specify the study design and sample size in the methods sentence.
2. Language requires professional editing for grammar, clarity, and redundancy.
3. Some references are outdated, tangential, or weakly linked to the stated claims.
4. Figures and tables could be condensed to reduce repetition between text and visuals.
5. The conclusion reiterates results but does not sufficiently emphasize limitations.

### Recommendations

- (a) Clearly redefine and delimit MSS versus health anxiety constructs.
- (b) Strengthen the rationale and explicitly state the study's unique contribution.
- (c) Reframe statistical interpretations with emphasis on effect sizes and clinical relevance.
- (d) Tighten the discussion to reflect only measured variables.
- (e) Improve language quality and methodological transparency.