Reviewer’s report

Title: Diabetes Mellitus: Indigenous naming, indigenous diagnosis and self-management in an African setting: the example from Cameroon

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Reviewer: Ghazala Rafique

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This paper describes the indigenous naming, indigenous diagnosis and self-management in the context of an African setting in Cameroon. The authors’ objective was to relate the indigenous naming, indigenous diagnosis and self-management in developing a socially oriented theoretical model for its care.

The idea is quite interesting and important in the cultural context.

The paper is well written with adequately described, scientifically sound methodology. However, there is not enough information on sample selection – what was the selection criteria; how were the study subjects recruited?

In the result section the indigenous naming and the evolution of taxonomy for diabetes and self-diagnosis have been described adequately and help in understanding patients’ perception of the illness in the traditional context. However, relating the indigenous naming and diagnosis to the processes of self-management is not coming out explicitly in this study. It is not clear how self-diagnosis or diagnosis by divination is linked to the illness management and practices; how the revelation of the diviner linking the influence of the ancestors or witchcraft to the appearance of diabetes affected the experience of the illness and its management; whether it led to a change in the knowledge, skills or lifestyle for managing the illness and controlling blood sugar levels.

In the discussion again the indigenous naming and diagnosis and the resultant patients understanding of the illness and its effect on self-management needs further reflection.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.