Reviewer's report

Title: Gender difference in specialty preference and mismatch with real needs in Japanese medical students

Version: 1 Date: 2 September 2009

Reviewer: ASTRID VALENZUELA

Reviewer's report:

1. Q: Is the question well defined?
A: yes

2. Are methods appropriate and well described?
A: Yes

3. Are the data sound?
A: We only get the results of the questionnaire in terms of total students being interviewed, but we don’t know how many of the belonged to each gender.

4. Q: Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
A: Actual number of women (men) is missing.

5. Q: Are the discussion and conclusion well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
A: Discussion has a bibliographic support. But regarding conclusions, it is not possible to infere from one sample a phenomenon that could affect the whole country. On the other side, it should be matter of another review how women’s participation in Japanese society could influence female students’ choice of a medical specialty and not a conclusion of this paper.

6. Q: Are limitations stated?
A: yes. One important topic is missing: the sample is not homogeneus in terms that a first degree student could change his preferences as years pass so it could happen that it’s not representative.

7. Q: Do authors clearly aknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
A: I think yes

8. Q: Do title and abstract accurately convey what was found?
A: yes

9. Q: Is writing acceptable?
A: yes

Major compulsory revisions
• Actual number of women (men) is missing
• It’s important to comment as a limitation that the sample is not homogeneous in terms that a first degree student could change his preferences as years pass so it could happen that it’s not representative and no valid

Minor essential revisions: non

Discretionary revisions: Japanese women’s role in society couldn’t be among the conclusions of this paper.

Advise:
Accept only after responding to major compulsory revision

Level of interest:
It’s an article with importance in its field.

Quality of written English:
Acceptable.

Statistical review:
It doesn’t need to be seen by a statistician.

Conflicts of interest of the reviewer:
I declare that I have no competing interests.

Astrid Valenzuela