Reviewer’s report

Title: The characteristics of a good clinical teacher as perceived by resident physicians in Japan: a qualitative explorative study

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Reviewer: dilek guldal

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Major compulsory revisions

Articles reflecting students’ viewpoints are becoming increasingly important due to the tendency of medical education to evolve towards student centeredness. So this article has an importance and value. But I think it has also many methodological problems in it.

In the method section, the description of the study design should be precise. As far as I understood, the purpose of this article is to develop a theory about the qualities of a good teacher in medical education, from the perspective of the students. Such an aim is relevant with the grounded theory design.

I also would like to know something more about the sampling. How did the authors recruit the participants? How many focus group sessions did the authors intent to conduct? Were 23 participants from different specialty programs enough to reach data saturation?

The results seem to be forced to fit into Sutkin’s categories. I have strong doubts about the relevancy of that kind of force-fitting because it conflicts with the purpose of the qualitative studies, especially those with the design of grounded theory. Sutkin’s categories may provide good data for comparison and interpretation of the original results of this study in the discussion section but not in the results section. The analysis of the data of this study may lead us to different categorizations and classifications.

The results section does not include the data which usually consists of statements of the participants that are most relevant to constitute a base for the results of the study. We even cannot see the results of the study that are consistent with the Sutkin’s model. This may be given with another table.

It is not easy to have some comments about the discussion section because of the lack of results. But the authors’ statements about the limitations of the study actually reflect the nature of the qualitative research. Random sampling is not necessary in qualitative research, purposeful sampling is fundamental. We don’t expect to generalize the results of a qualitative study, so it is not the limitation of a qualitative study, but is the nature of a qualitative study.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
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