Author's response to reviews

**Title:** Medical students' perceptions in relation to ethnicity and gender: a qualitative study

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Editor
BioMed Central Editorial Team
British Medical Education

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Medical students’ perceptions in relation to ethnicity and gender: a qualitative study. Reference MS: 211169674791642

Thank you for sending us the peer reviewers’ comments. We shall address this each in turn.

Reviewer 1: Gillian E White

1 Inclusion of data analysis in abstract section
Added details of the data analysis in method section to the abstract.[see p.2]

2 The method and its rational
Our description of our method [see p.6] involving ‘discourse analysis’ is on reflection, incorrect (discourse analysis was drawn on in parts of the PhD report from which this study was derived, but is not in evidence here). We have in fact used an extremely common and straight forward analytic approach which has been described more fully in the revised method section [see p.6]. Supporting a qualitative thematic analysis of this sort with simple counts (producing in effect a conjoint qualitative and quantitative report) is standard practice. We have described the method and its trustworthiness in the publications we have referred to [see references 27-29]. We will be pleased to supply the referee with copies of the relevant extracts from the standard student text book accounts if the referee would find this helpful.

3 Sub-headings for results
These have been included and modified as suggested, except that we prefer the subheading ‘gender and future careers’ to ‘future and gendered careers’ In addition all the quotations used have been incorporated into the body of the text as suggested. [see pages 7-17]

4 Couple of suggestions.
These have been edited as proposed: [see p.19, second paragraph, line 4]. The section on affirmations of personal worth has been deleted.

The 3 minor essential revisions have also been addressed in full: the word aspect has been replaced with the word ‘element’ [see p.3], class has been replaced by social class [see p.4], the terms class ceiling [see p.4, last
paragraph] and hidden curriculum [see p.5, second paragraph] have been defined.

**Reviewer 2: Katarina Hamberg**

1 **Description of the method**
See above under point 2. The year of the study [see p.5] and the duration of the interviews [see p.6] have been added.

2 **Saturation**
We have discussed this in some detail, acknowledging that this point is a delicate judgement [see p.5].

3 **Use of counting methods**
Generalisability: we have added a section to the first paragraph of the Discussion section [see p.17] to address concerns about generalisability in more details. We have clarified that all students were asked the same questions, as given in the interview schedule in Appendix 1. [see also p.6]
We have also indicated on this page that our counting is designed to give a rough idea of the prevalence of the themes.

4 **Incomplete introduction**
The literature has been expanded in relation to gender and ethnicity as suggested. [see p. 4-5 & p.18-19]

5 **Data analyses**
We have made clearer that both authors contributed to the data analyses, [see p.6 & 20] and that the interviews were conducted by the first author. [see p.6 first paragraph]

We trust these revisions have responded fully to all the points made by the reviewers. We look forward to your decision on this paper. We confirm that we have reformatted the paper to your specifications.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Heidi Lempp                      pp. Prof. Clive Seale