Reviewer’s report

Title: Which positive factors give General Practitioners job satisfaction and make General Practice a rewarding career? A European multicentric qualitative research by the European General Practice Research Network.

Version: 0 Date: 05 Oct 2018

Reviewer: Grant Russell

Reviewer's report:

Thanks for the opportunity to review the article Which positive factors give General Practitioners job satisfaction and make General Practice a rewarding career? A European multicentric qualitative research by the European General Practice Research Network for the BMC Family Practice.

The study intended to clarify the positive factors involved in appeals and retention in GP throughout Europe.

The aim was to explore the positive factors supporting the satisfaction of General Practitioners (GPs) in clinical practice throughout Europe.

This was a solid article that describes some common themes in GPs self perception across Europe. While the article was carefully presented, I felt that there were numerous examples where the quality of the written English detracts from the quality of the article.

For example: the term "forcefulness balance" (line 24 page 6) is strange; and sentence fragments like "furthermore, General Practice has a specific context and job satisfaction theories overlap" (page 7) could be reviewed for clarity. Overall the English seemed better later in the article - a careful proof read would would reduce the frequent iterations and make the work more readable.

I had several suggestions concerning the paper, each relate to sections of the work.

1) Background and contextualisation.

The authors frame the problem in terms of the shortage of generalist primary care physicians in Europe and the perceived need to focus upon those positive factors that attract and retain GPs in the workforce. The case for the research is reasonable, although some of the justifications (ie the term of "confusion bias") are a little confusing (ie "hygiene").
2) Description of the methods

The methods were staged and thoughtful. I liked the collaborative approach and how there appears to have been significant thought put into the unfolding analysis. They used a template editing approach with what seemed to be a pre-determined coding tree. Saturation at a national level seemed a good decision. In terms of reflexivity we had some insight into the background of the researchers, although it would have helped to have a better idea of the discipline of the leaders and main influencers of the work.

3) Analysis and presentation of the findings

There was a good use of quotes and the findings were clearly presented.

The sample is reasonably well described, although I would have liked to have had an idea of the distribution of participants at early stages of their careers. I worry a bit when participants seem to speak with one voice - that is very much the case in this article. Indeed the authors provide a description of the findings that generates very little discrepancy in terms of findings apart from its mention about the different perspectives across nations.

I would have been very interested for example to see whether there was a range in findings along age, gender or experience lines.

The discussion puts the results into the context of other general practice studies, and has a focus on WONCA's capability statements. I was unsure why there was a focus on these, given that it was not an intent of the study.

I have several suggestions to improve the work:

Firstly As with many qualitative studies (and this may be a language issue) the authors present the assertions about the participants as facts rather than being personal perspectives. For example at the bottom of page 17 - "Positive GPs are persons with intrinsic specific characteristics (open-minded, curious) and they feel comfortable in their job when they are trained in specific clinical and technical skill areas and have efficient communication skills." Inserting the words the participants "described themselves as being" would be a more accurate summary of the data.
Despite the work being conducted from a phenomenological perspective, I was struck by its atheoretical nature. The findings are described rather than analysed and despite reference to other GP literature, the themes weren't examined in terms of some of the broader literature about professionals and their working lives. While not critical, this would have added considerably to the value of the article.

Finally, I think that there could be a better justification of the premise of the paper. It clearly sought positive factors- I can understand this but perhaps a better case should be made in the introduction as to why more of a balance wasn't sought to explore the competing demands that may influence self perception even in the light of a positive notion of self and profession.

Overall this is a solid if unspectacular paper. A deeper and more thoughtful analysis, particularly a search for disconfirming cases would have added to its contribution. As it is, the transcontinental perspective is of interest to the readers of the journal.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the article, I hope the review has been of assistance.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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