Reviewer's report

Title: Patients' Perspectives of Outcomes after Total Knee and Total Hip Arthroplasty: A Nominal Group Study

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Reviewer: Annette de Thurah

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The purpose of this study is to rank the most important outcomes after total joint replacement.

The method used is nominal group technique, a method which was originally developed for evaluation of education.

As also mentioned by the authors, this method is very structured, and driven by consensus. Therefore, it does not leave room for much variation among participants. I think the authors must address this important issue. Why was this method chosen in the first place, and what are the pros and cons? This must be elaborated in more detail.

I find it hard to see the argument for this.

Secondly, 475 patients declined or did not meet the criteria. A total of the remaining 106 were interested. But then the numbers don't add up. I would suggest a flow-diagram. Only approximately 20 % of all potential patients agreed to participate, and (as also stated by the authors) they where white, well educated, pain free and with a high degree of satisfaction. This can hardly call 'purposeful sampling'. It is highly selected. This must be elaborated in more detail.

The results section is suffering from a lack of cogency and a lack of theory based analysis. If the purpose of the study is to rank outcomes, why then talk about: 'optimization of post-operative care', 'concern about patient education'. This has to do with patient satisfaction with the operation procedure and process. Moreover, how can; 'relief of pain' and 'improved function and mobility' be characterized as a 'concern'? It is as if the authors have forgotten the purpose of the study, and report all the experiences that these patients might have had during the course of operation, and not only the ranking of outcomes.

The authors conclude that the top 3 outcomes are: relief of pain, improved function and quality of life. These are all indications for offering total joint replacement in the first place, and therefore this study does not add much new to the field.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?

If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No
Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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

No

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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