

Review of: "Characterization of Workplace Violence in Healthcare Workers at an Emergency Room in Bogotá, Colombia"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

I thank you for the opportunity to review this article that focuses on workplace violence against medical staff in an emergency room in Bogotá. I found the idea of working on the issue very relevant and encourage the authors to further develop their paper. Below are some suggestions to improve it.

First, the authors should state more clearly since the introduction that their article focuses on violence performed against medical staff only by patients. I initially thought it would also deal with violence enacted by peers and the hospital hierarchy.

Second, an overall description of the staff working at the hospital and more specifically in the emergency room is missing from the article. How many persons work at the HUSI (including those who did not answer your questionnaire)? Could you please provide information on their demographics?

Third, I agree with most of the reviewers who underscore that the sample is quite small for conducting statistical analysis and that is biased as it mainly included students and few interns. As we don't have general information on the hospital demographic, we ignore if this is because most of the staff in this unit are students and interns. As it is, the paper mainly brings information on students' and interns' experience of violence in the emergency room.

The authors could follow different strategies to enlarge the empirical data collected and better support their argument. As suggested by colleagues, they can enlarge the sampling and include other professions, but they can also conduct in-depth interviews or do both and develop a paper based on mixed methods.

Concerning the analytical section, I would include in the analysis a reflection on the hierarchical position of participants within the organization and how this affects their experiences. Are students faced with the same type of violence as practitioners and physicians?

The authors indicate that: «We found that the risk factors for workplace violence at the emergency room, as perceived by the participants, are mainly related to unrealistic expectations of patients and companions, ignorance about disease/state of health, and overcrowded emergency guards.»

I think this statement needs to be further contextualized, as patients' voices were not taken into consideration. Therefore, you are reporting the representation that medical staff have about patients' beliefs and concerns. You would need to

interview or conduct a survey with patients to know if this corresponds to their perceptions and whether these statements do not include also forms of stereotyping of patients' perceptions.

Lastly, it would be interesting to know whether a restitution meeting was organized with the medical staff and what eventually emerged from it. Besides permitting the authors to gather further empirical data useful for their analysis, a restitution meeting can also be a starting point from which to raise awareness and initiate a reflection within the hospital on how to address the issue.

I see potential in your paper and encourage you to further develop it.