Reviewer's report

Title: Perspectives about and approaches to weight gain in pregnancy: A qualitative study of physicians and nurse midwives

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Reviewer: Severine Thys

Reviewer's report:

1. The question posed by the authors is well defined. They identified a gap to improve this particular health issue and tried to address it by completing the picture with the prenatal care providers’ perception, approach and challenges regarding management of weight gain during pregnancy.

But as major compulsory revision, what is really missing in this manuscript it’s a (small) literature review on what are the main findings about patients perception, approach and challenges of weight gain during pregnancy (see background). It will allow the reader to have a better understanding and more complete picture of this health issue and moreover it will allow the authors to compare it with their main results (see discussion).

2. As a second major compulsory revision, I really feel like the discussion of the results is not really discussing it. It’s all about recommendations, suggestions about how to improve prenatal care for this particular health problem, which must be placed in the conclusion section.

There is no reference to other previous findings that challenge, compare, confirm those results. I’m not at all familiar with this health problem and I don’t know what already exists in terms of literature but even if nothing comparable has been done (even in another setting, country culture), that must be mentioned.

Even if the presentation of the results are well structured, in the discussion there is no reference to any theoretical framework, concept, model that explain (even partially) those results in that particular study context (part of the discussion).

3. As considered as a minor essential revision, according to me an information is missing in the background about this statement “Obesity among reproductive age women is a prevalent, debilitating,…”:

- Where is that the case? I suppose in US if you look at the reference 1 but it leads to less confusion if it’s mentioned in the text as early as possible.
- What is the range of age considered by the author as the reproductive age?
- What kind of US women we are referring too? (race, socio-economic status, education level,...)

4. According to their study objective, the method chosen is appropriate and quite well described. However there are some minor essential revisions regarding
method description:

a. About the design: It’s mentioned that the study procedures were approved by the University of Michigan’s IRB but what about ethical clearance? In qualitative research it’s not always requested by the IRB but if the study protocol was reviewed by an ethical committee, it must be mentioned.

b. About Participants and Recruitment: I would just add how many eligible providers were asked to participate to this study? How they were contacted (by phone, email, anonymously from the other candidates,…), how many refused to participate and why (no time,…), were they paid (money, other type of incentives,…)? And I have a last question (more for curiosity): Why informed consent was verbally obtained and not signed (trust issues, local procedure,…).

c. About data collection: Instead of the first “WE”, I would rather direct start by mentioning who, how may conducted the interviews.

d. About data analysis: Just need to be mentioned that it has been done inductively (>< deductive).

Did the authors used any Qualitative data analysis software to store, organize the data and the codification (QSR international as NVivo,..)? If yes, it must be mentioned.

5. In the results section, about the overview. It is said that no notable differences between specialty groups were found. But what about gender? Were there any differences between men and women participants? Even if the gender issue was not considered as comparative participant’s characteristic for care providers selection, it might be something interesting to consider in further studies. As discretionary revisions, that can be add in the conclusion as a recommendation or as a limitation. In the same line, as some cultural aspects seem to intervene in the gain weight management, the recommendation may include an eventual comparative study among different ethnic groups of care providers and/or patients.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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