Reviewer's report

Title: Correlates of quality of life of overweight patients: a pharmacy-based cross-sectional survey

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Reviewer: Edwin Wouters

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The article examines the effects of number of patient characteristics on different dimensions of QoL in sample of obese patients presenting themselves in a local pharmacy. The authors conclude that obesity has a negative impact on all four dimensions of QoL and that future research on QoL in obese patients should take patient characteristics such as age, gender, SES, dietary habits and physical activity into account. Although these conclusions are useful for future research, a number of issues arise when reading the manuscript. These issues have to be addressed to make the manuscript suitable for publication.

Major compulsory revisions:
I will list them following the structure of the manuscript.

1. The background section needs to be extended. For example, the first paragraph contains two sentences, which are not well connected. More background information would be useful.

2. The second paragraph explains that “excess weight is detrimental to patients’ QoL”. One might wonder why the current study is needed when we already know that excess weight negatively influences different aspects of QoL?

3. The methods section: the way the respondents are selected is problematic. First of all, the convenience sample is not representative for the obese population, which hampers generalizations and policy recommendations. The authors state this in the limitations section.

But the second problem is much more serious. The authors select their respondents in local pharmacies, which results in the fact that only obese patients who visit their pharmacy can be included in the study (one can argue that all people visit the pharmacy at least from time to time, but this still means that patients who visit the pharmacy more often have a greater chance to be included into the sample). This type of sampling results in a ‘selection bias’: patients who regularly visit the pharmacy have some kind of medical problem and are therefore expected to have poorer QoL. The authors select their respondents on the basis of a criterion that is heavily associated with the dependent variable (QoL). The sample will most probably underestimate the QoL of the obese population. This can also disturb the other associations (as for example poor obese people with a good QoL do not visit the pharmacy and rich
obese people with good QoL do to buy expensive beauty products).

4. Measuring patients’ relations with other people and their psychological state with only one question seems too narrow. It is very difficult to measure these complex interactions and emotions with only one item. The authors should explain the limited validity of these measurements.

5. The conclusions do not seem very innovative. The findings that older people and people of lower socio-economic status have poorer QoL are general socio-medical phenomena that are not restricted to obese people.

Minor essential revision:
1. Typo: second to last paragraph of the methods section: ‘pour’ should be ‘poor’

To conclude, the manuscript provides interesting information on the factors influencing different aspects of QoL in an obese sample of patients. However, the conclusions do not seem really innovative (as conclusions have already been reported in other studies) and there are serious problems with the sampling procedure (selection bias probably causing an underestimation of the QoL) which curtail the reliability of the conclusions.

Language: OK, although I am not a native speaker.
Statistics: OK

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.