Reviewer's report

Title: Consumption of indigenous medicines by pregnant women in North India for selecting sex of the foetus: what can it lead to?

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Reviewer: Fabio Facchinetti

Reviewer's report:

This study reports a qualitative analysis of a series of herbal medicine popular in Indian women which they used in order to help selection of neonatal gender, in the way to increase male respect to female. This practice is part of the cultural attitude.

Authors collected samples from different sources, including doctors (?) and were able to quantify the presence in each sample of estrogen-receptor agonists as well testosterone.

We have to be grateful to studies like this one. However:

Major revision
1) Authors should add a table listing the different “drugs”, each one with its phytoestrogen or testosterone content

Minor revisions
2) In agreement with the prescriptions they are able to collect, it will be much informative for readers as well for Indian health authorities to calculate approx. the daily dose of phyestrogens intaken. This would help also the search for possible correlations between each specific “drug” and fetal/neonatal malformations

3) Overall the paper, the term fetal is often used. However, since the timing of “drug” consumption it will be better refer as to embryo.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

None