Reviewer’s report

Title: Selling health and happiness How influencers communicate on Instagram about dieting and exercise: mixed methods research

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Reviewer: Shannon Sahlqvist

Reviewer's report:
I was interested to review this article which reports on the ways 'influences' communicate on the social media platform, Instagram, about diet and exercise. The authors used both quantitative and qualitative methods. Interesting insights were garnered about the strategies used. This is an important topic and worthy of publication.

The focus of the paper seems to be young people, yet the sample includes the top 50 accounts regardless of whether they target young people or not? Is it possible that some of these accounts are not aimed at young people, and if so how does this effect the results? Could the authors comment on this in the paper. Also, what proportion of the accounts were male influences and what proportion were female influencers?

Could Table 1 be made clearer please? While features 1, 2 & 3 are self-explanatory, the remaining are unclear. How were these data derived and what do they mean?

What is meant on page 8, line 174 - 'we have evaluated the generated research material inductively, meaningfully reconstructing and interpretively'. Could the authors go into more detail about how the analysis was conducted?

On page 6, the authors write, 'In order to gain further insights, we selected 27 cases for qualitative content analysis'. The authors mention that a case is a heading being the starting point but this is not clear to me. And why these 27? The authors mention saturation - but could they go into a little more detail. The authors mention 18 extreme and 9 typical - what did they define as 'extreme' and what is 'typical'.

What are the 38 items that are referred to on page six, line 153?

On line 154 of this page, should it be techniques not technology?

What is meant on page 3, line 64 - the ever increasing share of minors with morbid over-underweight poses major public health challenges?

Page 4 line 90 - is this per day?

As a whole, the results section is written like a discussion. It is not clear how the authors derive at most of the points. Adding illustrative quotes would add support to what the authors are saying. As an example, the authors write that 'sporting success is not measured by physical
performance, but exclusively by visual appearance'. How did the authors derive at this? And 'on the one hand, the position of an expert is attempted with the help of rhetorical means and specifically selected content'. Could an example be provided? How does the influence consciously intend to create or increase perceive similarity between themselves and their followers?

While the Chances and Risk section in the Discussion is interesting, I am not sure it is relevant to the results presented. It’s almost as if this could go in the introduction to reiterate the importance of the work.

Perhaps the results and discussion could be combined.

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

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Needs some language corrections before being published

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