Reviewer’s report

Title: The footwear experiences of people with gout: a qualitative study

Version: 0 Date: 25 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Olivia King

Reviewer's report:

Dear Mr Frecklington and Co-authors,

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper. It is pleasing to see this qualitative study exploring the experiences of people living with gout, obtaining and wearing footwear. It is a worthwhile study and I believe it is suitable for publication in JFAR. I do suggest several edits and minor revisions, and present my comments according to the manuscript subheadings.

Abstract

On page 2, line 29 please elaborate on the term "participation". Line 34, insert "the presence of" before "tophi" and elaborate on "compromise".

Background

The paper is well-contextualised by previous literature, however a brief definition of the terms gout and tophi would be helpful, particularly for the non-podiatrist audience (e.g. footwear manufacturers, retailers and others providing foot health care providers). On page 3, the sentence on lines 30- 34 is unclear, please revise.

On page 3, line 39, consider replacing "in this population" with "of people living with gout". I would also suggest rewording the aim to reflect the findings presented (you could simply exclude barriers and facilitators).

Methods

There appears to be some dissonance in the underpinning theoretical perspectives and the approaches to data collection and analysis. Perhaps consider replacing the statement on page 3 (line 54- 56) "descriptive methodology being the underpinning philosophy" with something like,
This qualitative study sought to gain insight into the subjective experiences of people living with gout in obtaining and wearing footwear. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the participants' unique (or individual) perspectives. (For example).

Please reconsider the term "saturation" (page 4 line 58) which is associated with grounded theory methodology. Instead you might consider the ways you achieved information power. Please see: Varpio, L., Ajjawi, R., Monrouxe, L. V., O'Brien, B. C., & Rees, C. E. (2017). Shedding the cobra effect: problematising thematic emergence, triangulation, saturation and member checking. Medical Education, 51(1), 40-50.

Given the chosen methodology, it would be worthwhile considering the notion of researcher reflexivity; that is, what the authors bring to the study, in particular to the collection and analysis of the data. It is not a disadvantage being a podiatrist, but rather than merely stating that the researcher / interviewer is an experienced podiatrist, explaining how this impacted the data collection and analysis. See Braun & Clarke (2006, p.82).

On page 4, the statement "Face-to-face interviews were undertaken …" might fit better in data collection. Also on page 4, on line 34, insert the word "held" between "were" and "to".

With respect to the thematic analysis, you might mean inductive (or abductive) thematic analysis rather than constant comparative (page 5, line 7)?

To assure readers of the rigour of the study, consider describing the data analysis according to Braun and Clarke's six-phase process, given that is the approach referenced (and followed according to Figure 1).

**Results**

It is not indicated in the manuscript where Table 1 will be placed. If not presented in the body of the manuscript, it would be worthwhile briefly describing the participant characteristics in the text. The majority of participants were male, which is likely a reflection of the gout-affected population. Perhaps you could state this.

Minor comment, consider removing theme 1, theme 2 etc. from the results subheadings.

Under the "Knowing what to buy" subheading, the first quote presented is not the most vivid example of this theme, when compared with the other example quotes and leaves the reader feeling a bit confused about the difference between themes 1 and 2. I suggest you consider excluding this quote.

Minor comment, on page 8, line 58, replace term disconnect with tension (or something of the like).
Discussion

On page 10, line 17, consider replacing the term "good" with "particular". As I understand it, this study explores participants' experiences and does not seek define or link features of footwear to the symptoms of gout. Similarly, please revise the paragraph on page 10 (lines 41-49) to reflect that these were participants' perspectives.

The bottom paragraph on page 10 is a little awkward, please revise the sentence beginning "In social settings …"

Minor comments: on page 11 line 17, replace "do" with "did" and lines 55-56 replace "The participant's" with "Participants' ".

Conclusion

Summarises the paper neatly, however I would replace the term "barriers" to "challenges" (line 27).

Thank you and very best wishes,

Olivia King

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Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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