Reviewer's report

Title: Body shape expectations and self-ideal body shape discrepancy in women seeking bariatric surgery: A cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: Christine Peat

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The current paper examines body shape expectations in a sample of women who are seeking bariatric surgery. The study addresses a potentially important concept in bariatric surgery in that expectations might play a role in adherence to recommendations and overall success after surgery. In this regard, the manuscript is of importance to readers of BMC Obesity; however there are several points in the study that merit further discussion/editing before publication:

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1. Page 4, line 118 – Given that the authors point out that younger, Caucasian women might be prone to the most unrealistic weight loss expectations, were there efforts to recruit these participants? Or to analyze subsets of the sample to see if this held up with your participants?
2. Page 6, line 165 – It is somewhat concerning to me that “goal body shape” and “ideal body shape” were assumed to be equivalent. I would caution the authors to provide more rationale here. In many cases, the “goal body shape/weight” is determined by the nurse practitioner or surgeon based on expected weight loss and health/overweight BMI range, whereas “ideal” tends to be more patient-driven and may not always reflect realistic weight loss. Can the authors provide more detail here on why the two constructs were thought to be equivalent?
3. Also, how does “goal” or “ideal” body shape differ from the “dream” or “happy” body shape that participants selected? Some further detail here would be important in understanding some of the nuance here.
4. Page 8, line 239 – Was the difference between evidence-based 1-year weight loss outcomes from LSG and women’s postoperative goal body shape statistically significant? If so, this would help bolster the importance of the authors’ findings.

Minor Essential Revisions:
1. Page 3, paragraphs 1 and 2 - I would consider deleting these paragraphs as they have little to do with the subject matter of the study itself. The discussion of psychosocial pressures etc. is not addressed in the study is therefore irrelevant.
2. Page 4, lines 105-127 – I would suggest that the authors find a way of combining and/or editing these paragraphs for better flow. Right now they read as somewhat choppy and disjointed but some small editing changes could
significantly improve readability.

3. Page 4, line 121 – It’s curious to me that the authors mention these constructs as potential outcomes but they are not measured in the study. The authors should provide a very careful rationale as to why these were not included and/or should strike this section from the Introduction (and perhaps move it to the Discussion).

4. Page 5, line 159 – I would suggest striking this last sentence of the paragraph. I’m having a hard time seeing how this is relevant here and it might also suggest that the authors should have used alternative silhouette scales.

5. Page 7, line 217 – I would consider deleting this information as it seems irrelevant to the study. Comorbidities are not discussed in detail or interpreted in a way that might be relevant to body shape expectation.

6. I would encourage the authors to refocus their discussion section to read less as a statement of the relevant findings and more as an in-depth interpretation of the results. What might the results tell the reader clinically? Scientifically? How might results like this impact evaluations? Post-surgical care? Etc.

7. Page 9, line 265 – It seems confusing to reference the Munoz et al. study when it was longitudinal and this one was cross-sectional. It might be better to simply state that the self-ideal body shape discrepancies found in this sample were similar to those reported by Munoz and colleagues.

8. Page 9, line 277 – I think the authors should exercise caution here in interpreting the meaning of women’s underestimation of current body size. It seems a big jump to go from underestimating one’s size to being unaware of health risks associated with an increased BMI.

**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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.