Reviewer’s report

Title: Healthy Life Centres participants’ perceptions of changing dietary and activity habits: A qualitative interview study of persons afflicted by overweight or obesity

Version: 0 Date: 09 Oct 2018

Reviewer: Carl J. Brandt

Reviewer's report:

The paper covers perspectives from patients on an important topic in relation to the experience of receiving lifestyle advice from healthcare providers and deserves to be published.

The method is sound and well described with some changes specified below.

Overall the paper is well written all though the red line at times is difficult to find. The paper brings new knowledge to the experience of patients deciding to receive lifestyle advice in a very vulnerable position. It gives new knowledge to how these patients view themselves and their situation and what aspects needs to be handled to meet them respectfully.

Title: I find the paper interesting in regard to the ambivalence people with obesity have in relation to barriers when receiving support especially in relation to perception of self more than general perception of changing habits why I suggest this is reflected to a larger extend in the title.

Abstract:

Well written. The paper is very much about "self-representation" this needs to be reflected in the rest of the paper. I disagree that lifestyle change is time consuming per se and don't see that supported in the paper. Healthy living might be perceived as time consuming, but it doesn't have to be and it is a question of lifestyle choices in the end.

Line 35: I don't think the paper is about the perception of change, but more about the perception of living with obesity and seeking help for a perceived "wrong" lifestyle. Would benefit from rewording.

Line 39: These themes would benefit to be lifted to a metalevel and some restructuring ie. internal and external barriers and feelings etc.

Background:

Overall the paragraph is too long and repeats it self. Below some suggested changes:
Line 54: to 62 could be deleted.

Line 66: "NCDs is::" instead of "NCDs has"

Line 67: to line 80 can be deleted, as it is a repetition or commonly known.

Line 89-90: "No matter how self-disciplined individuals are, they face a dilemma in choosing between pleasure and health". I disagree and cannot find the wording in the references. It is a pleasure to live a healthy life, many healthy habits are pleasurable, but for most individuals this can be seen as the perceived dilemma in the short-term perspective. It needs revision or should be deleted.

Study context

Line 140: What Health care professionals?

Participants

Line 157: BMI 25 seems low. With the topic discussed I think BMI 30+ would be more interesting and I would not include patients with BMI less than 30.

Line 162-167 Should maybe go into the table 1

Table 1

Needs to be extended with more details.

Data on BMI is missing

Average age?

Diagnoses as mentioned above

Line 177-178. A table with questions from the interview guide would be beneficial

Line 189: Was the interview guide altered in accordance with Malterud after the first 3 to 5 interviews? Or did the other authors not see the transcripts before all interviews had been performed?
Results:

Table 2. Themes and subthemes does not seem distinct and the overall themes tend to be a list of aspect: shame, guilt, pride, motivation etc. A metaperspective would strengthen the paper. What framework did the authors use for the thematic analysis e.g Thomas and Harden? Here is a link to thematic frameworks that will facilitate this further

Subtheme 1B and Line 211 should reflect the perceived short-term struggle between health and "pleasure"

The result would benefit from narrowing the paper down to what is found about the experience of having to receive help in a vulnerable situation with a fragile perception of self. I see themes like "identity", "loss" and "excuses"/keeping integrity" arise.

I don't understand the theme "discouragement that affect management"

Line 372 to 388 does not add information

Discussion:

Needs to be more focused and shortened.

Line 482 to 483. Go strait to your finding.

Line 489: "..we found that men and women had different perceptions.." I cannot see this supported in the data.

Line 491: This is a simple not reflected statement not looking at all the great data you have about identity crisis etc.

Line 521: It is important to distinguish between content knowledge and operational knowledge found in the social cognitive theory (SCT) by Bandura.

Reference 50 and 51 is cited extensively. The discussion would benefit from focusing on new findings.

Line 600 - 620 Discussing pride and self esteem I miss the theory behind self-efficacy from SCT.

Line 640: The health believe model has been moderated by several authors ie. in the SCT

Line 679 repeats line 672 to 674
Conclusion:

Well written. Minor corrections needed in relation to what is stated above

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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