

## Peer Review Report

# Review Report on FEAR AND ANXIETY IN PREGNANT WOMEN DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Review, Int J Public Health

Reviewer: Zuzana Skodova

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### EVALUATION

#### **Q 1** Please summarize the main theme of the review.

The main aim of the study is to give an overview of the recent research of the COVID pandemic on levels of fear and anxiety among pregnant women.

#### **Q 2** Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

strengths of the study:

up to date topic

research design (systematic review)

appraising of the methodological quality of studies included in the review

manuscript is written in a clear, concise style

discussion part of the manuscript

limitations:

problems with the terminology used in the study: main focus of the study is on fear and anxiety among pregnant women, however, it seems that several studies included in the review were measuring fear of childbirth- which is a distinct terminological unit and should be differentiated from the general fear, or ad-hoc fear.

#### **Q 3** Please provide your detailed review report to the authors, structured in major and minor comments.

Major comments:

main focus of the study is on fear and anxiety among pregnant women, however, it seems that several studies included in the review were measuring fear of childbirth- which is a distinct terminological unit and should be differentiated from the general fear, or ad-hoc fear throughout the manuscript.

In the Introduction part of the manuscript, there is no overview of the current state of the research focused on the fear of childbirth, such as definition of the term, prevalence of the fear of childbirth in different countries, clinical relevance- association with the lower birth satisfaction, higher risk of obstetrics complications, association with the caesarean section on demand, association with the higher risk of the traumatic birth experience...)

in the Results section (line 198) authors have stated that anxiety was measured by W-DEQ-A questionnaire- however, this questionnaire is widely used to measure specifically the fear of childbirth among pregnant women- the outcome variable of this questionnaire is quite different from the Spielberg 's State Anxiety Inventory, HADS, or Beck Anxiety Inventory (which are measuring general anxiety) - this needs to be corrected, and also in the Discussion part of the manuscript, this needs to be taken into the account.

### PLEASE COMMENT

#### **Q 4** Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?

Yes.

**Q 5** Does this manuscript refer only to published data? (unpublished data is not allowed for Reviews)

Yes.

**Q 6** Does the manuscript cover the issue in an objective and analytical manner

Yes.

**Q 7** Was a review on the issue published in the past 12 months?

No.

**Q 8** Does the review have international or global implications?

Yes.

**Q 9** Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

Yes.

**Q 10** Are the keywords appropriate?

Yes, however, "fear of childbirth" should be added to the keywords

**Q 11** Is the English language of sufficient quality?

Yes.

**Q 12** Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

#### QUALITY ASSESSMENT

**Q 13** Quality of generalization and summary

☒ ☒ ☒ ☒ ☐

**Q 14** Significance to the field

☒ ☒ ☒ ☒ ☐

**Q 15** Interest to a general audience

☒ ☒ ☒ ☒ ☐

**Q 16** Quality of the writing

☒ ☒ ☒ ☐ ☐

#### REVISION LEVEL

**Q 17** Please take a decision based on your comments:

Major revisions.