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Title: Pregnant people's responses to the COVID-19 pandemic: a mixed methods descriptive study

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Reviewer: 1

Dr. Lissa Cohen

1. Interesting paper, however I would recommend that you consider using direct quotations to provide evidence to support the results i.e. a quotation from participants to describe: loss of support and connections and loss of control and autonomy etc. This would further provide readers with depth of understanding via a verbatim quotation. This would demonstrate a less positivistic approach to demonstrating your results. [Editorial note: As per CMAJ Open style, any quotes should be included in a table, not in the main text.]

Response: We appreciate this comment. We have followed CMAJ Open style in reporting quotes.

2. Additionally, a theoretical framework is missing from the methodology section therefore this would help direct readers to your epistemological and ontological perspective while presenting a guiding framework would help readers appreciate where your mixed methods study aligns with/fits on the epistemological spectrum. I am suspecting this study fits within a post-positivist perspective? however it is not clear from the methods/methodology section.

Response: We thank the reviewer for this comment. We used a pragmatism framework to conduct the study. We have added this information in the Methods section.

Reviewer: 2

Dr. Catherine Varner, Schwartz/Reisman Emergency Medicine Institute, University of Toronto

1. Thank you for your work on this paper entitled, "Pregnant people's responses to the COVID19 pandemic: A mixed methods descriptive study." It was well-conceived to embed this study in an ongoing study of pregnant patients at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the study took place during only the first few months of the pandemic, it is likely many of the themes remain a concern, nearly a year after the study was completed.

Response: We appreciate this comment.

2. I have a few minor questions/comments: The limitations' section should address the possibility of selection bias of study participants. It is obviously impossible to know the responses of those who did not answer the survey, but do the respondents reflect most pregnant patients eligible to participate? Were pregnant patients more likely to be worried about pandemic implications to their pregnancies more likely to complete the survey?

Response: We appreciate this comment. We have expanded the limitations section and

added this point as a limitation of this study.

3. There was a substantial deviation from research protocol of this ongoing study. What, if any, was the impact on the rigor of this mixed methods study given there was not an opportunity to pilot these questions or have them reviewed by possible research participants? Can this also be addressed in the limitations' section?
4. **Response:** We appreciate this comment. As noted previously, the protocol of the PSAS study or its main findings have not been published yet. The main purpose of the PSAS study was to develop a screening tool to measure pregnancy specific anxiety to use among general population of pregnant people. We did not change any PSAS study components thus there was no deviation from the research protocol. When pandemic emerged in BC, to understand how this unforeseen public health crisis was impacting our research participants, we added 6 open-ended questions to the end of our regular online surveys to collect qualitative perspectives. Since the PSAS study is focused on psychological well-being of pregnant people, there were already several quantitative measures of mental health status (including EPDS and GAD-7) in the original PSAS survey. The government of BC declared a state of emergency in BC on March 18, 2020 and we start collecting qualitative data on March 20, 2020. We agree with the reviewer that spending a couple of more weeks on further development of open-ended questions would have been an option but then we would have missed an opportunity to collect immediate prospective data related to the pandemic. To address this comment, we have added this to the limitations of the study.
5. Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper.
Response: We appreciate this comment.