

Reviewer comment-2

The topic is timely and of considerable importance. The intersection of menopause, behavioral health, and health disparities addresses a meaningful gap in practice and the literature. However, it would benefit from substantial revision to improve organization, streamline transitions, and strengthen synthesis.

The title is engaging, informative, and accurately reflects the primary focus of the manuscript. No revisions are recommended.

The abstract should be revised to conform to the Journal guidelines. Specifically, it exceeds the recommended level of detail, is not presented as a structured abstract (Summary, Findings, and Applications), and should be condensed to the journal's 250-word limit. While the abstract reflects the manuscript's scope, a more concise and structured presentation would improve readability and alignment with journal requirements.

The manuscript is generally well written and suitable for scholarly communication. However, a careful editorial review would improve clarity in several sections where awkward phrasing or occasionally complex sentence structure occasionally interrupts readability.

The manuscript addresses a broad range of interrelated topics relevant to menopause, behavioral health, and health disparities among Black women. While this interdisciplinary approach is a strength, the breadth of topics occasionally requires substantial transitions that reorient the reader to the central thesis. Consider whether some sections could be more tightly integrated or streamlined to improve narrative flow, reduce unnecessary reorientation, and maintain focus on the manuscript's central contribution.

The manuscript is well supported by a current and relevant body of literature. However, the reference list should undergo a comprehensive review for APA 7 compliance. Several journal articles are cited using publisher or abstract-page URLs despite having assigned DOIs. Where available, DOIs should be used in place of publisher URLs. Additionally, the reference list contains formatting inconsistencies and what appear to be internal research notes (e.g., "Source: ...pdf"), which should be removed prior to publication. A final audit of all references for accuracy, formatting, and consistency is recommended.

This manuscript addresses an important, timely, and often underrepresented topic with clear relevance to social work, behavioral health, and health equity. The authors should be commended for bringing together literature from multiple disciplines to examine the complex intersection of menopause, mental health, substance use, and health disparities among Black

women. The manuscript has a strong scholarly foundation and the potential to make a meaningful contribution to the literature.

My recommendations are intended to strengthen an already promising manuscript. I encourage the authors to focus on organization and synthesis, ensuring that each section builds upon the previous one while maintaining a clear focus on the manuscript's central contribution. Revising the abstract to align with journal requirements, streamlining transitions between sections, and conducting a thorough editorial review of the reference list (including APA 7 formatting and DOI usage where applicable) would substantially improve the manuscript's readability and scholarly presentation. I believe these revisions are well within reach and would significantly enhance the manuscript's impact.