Reviewer’s report

Title: Adverse birth outcomes among native-born, China-born, and Southeast Asia-born mothers in Taiwan: A population-based birth cohort study

Version: 2 Date: 9 September 2011

Reviewer: Lai-Chu See

Reviewer’s report:

Although the authors response to my comments, they fail to write them in the revised manuscript. Hence, readers, who have the same questions as mine, can’t see an answer in the manuscript. Be sure to write the relevant response but short text in the revised manuscript.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1. Representative of the sample: please discuss or analyze the difference between the sample (Taiwan Birth Cohort Study) and the population.
   Your response is satisfied. Be sure to write the relevant response but short text in the revised manuscript.

2. The rationale of having two foreign-born mothers (China-born mothers and Southeast Asia-born mothers): I do not see any discussion about the maternal characteristics and birth outcomes between these two groups.
   Your response is not satisfied. You need to tell the rationale of having two foreign-born mothers (China-born mothers and Southeast Asia-born mothers) in the introduction and summarize the difference in the discussion.

3. Comparison of maternal characteristics and birth outcomes between this submitted article and literature: I found that LBW rate and preterm birth rate in this submitted article are similar to the literature but the maternal characteristics of this submitted article are very different from the literature. I would like to see some discussion on this issue.
   Other than gestational diabetes mellitus, conditions during pregnancy may be lower in Taiwan Birth Reporting Database. I would like to see a paragraph about the difference in conditions during pregnancy in Taiwan Birth Reporting Database and your data.

4. Syphilis, a predisposing maternal factors, is not available: some discussion of this aspect is needed.
   Your response is satisfied. Be sure to write the relevant response but short text as a limitation in the revised manuscript.
5. Strange result about insignificance in preterm birth of southeast Asia-born mothers in model 1 but became significance in model 2 (Table 4): I suggest the authors look at this problem comprehensively. Stratification, interaction, or restriction may be cues.

I do not agree with suppression is a reason why preterm births of Southeast Asia-born mothers was insignificance in Model 2a and became significant in Model 2b (Table 4). Based on the result in Table 3, interaction between income and maternal nativity may be a cause. Did you check interaction part? Interaction between SES and maternal nativity is needed for logistic regression (Table 4) based on the result in Table 3.

6. Results of Chi-square and t tests which compare the bivariate relationships between maternal nativity, risk factors and birth outcomes (p.9, para 2, line 4-6) is not seen.

Your response is satisfied.

7. Title should be more specific: how about change birth outcomes to LBW and preterm birth?

Your response is satisfied.

New. Multiple comparison is needed for Table 1, 2 to show how three groups are different.

Minor essential revisions:

1. “very limited studies have shown the birth outcomes of foreign-born women in the Asia-pacific region (p. 5, para 2, last sentence)” should be deleted as this statement is not true (see reference 14-17).

You still need reference on “however, only a few have shown the birth outcomes of foreign-born women in the Asia-Pacific region.”(p.4, para 3, last sentence)

2. Wrong number of education grouping: the correct number should be three (0-9, 10-12, 13+), not 4 (p. 9, para 1, line 1) and 5 (p.9, para 1, line 3).

Your response is satisfied.

3. Incorrect text “when family socioeconomic factors such as family income and maternal education were adjusted, the difference in risk of LBW and preterm birth was reduced (p.14, para 3, last 3 sentences)” should be increased (e.g. odds ratio (OR) of preterm birth: 0.67 (model 1)#0.57 (model 2) for the China-born mothers, etc.) because the magnitude of OR depends on how OR away from
“1”.

Your response is satisfied.

New Minor essential revisions:

(1) Incorrect citation: reference 16 did consider predisposing maternal factors to preterm birth (p.5, para 1, line 8). Reference 14, 17 did have maternal age, pregnancy complication.

(2) Specify the written language used for the Chinese reference

(3) Punctuation: ‘.’ Missing in p. 12, para 2, line 10. “4,82” should be “4.82” in Table 3.

(4) Strange logic: How Table 1 show “foreign-born mothers may experience discrimination and stress before and during pregnancy, but the exposure may not be sufficient enough to cause adverse birth outcomes due to their short stay in Taiwan” (p.14, para 1, line 4-7)

(5) English editing is needed.

(6) Table 1: title should add “maternal and family characteristics”

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.