Reviewer's report

Title: A prospective study of effects of psychological factors and sleep on obstetrical interventions, mode of birth, and neonatal outcomes among low-risk British Columbian women

Version: 4 Date: 7 September 2011

Reviewer: Julie Quinlivan

Reviewer's report:

Comments
1. The questions are well defined but there are an awful lot of hypotheses for one paper
2. Methods are satisfactory but statistics needs expert review
3. Data are sound
4. Standards for reporting are met
5. Discussion needs some revision as listed below
6. Limitations not clearly outlined and should be addressed in discussion in more detail (eg generalisability of work)
7. Authors acknowledge work upon which research is based but the introduction is too long and overall needs to be shortened.
8. Title and abstract are okay
9. Writing is okay but a few minor points listed below.

Major compulsory revisions are listed below:

Background
1. Sentence 2 delete 'the' as incorrect grammar.
2. The introduction is too long. It needs to be more concise. For example, maybe cut paragraph 2, shorten the section previous work, reduce the section psychological states in pregnancy to a single paragraph and half the length of the paragraph on prenatal sleep deprivation (eg cut the study of 19 pregnant women).

Method
1. A lot of hypotheses were examined. Where any the main primary hypotheses or were they all equally important? Given the number of hypotheses, you should alter the p-value for significance. A statistical reviewer can assist to determine the appropriate level for significance given the number of comparisons being made.
2. Shorten the measures section in methods. No need to list every variable collected on the forms.
3. Shorten the paragraphs on the questionnaires and merely insert references. People who know the questionnaires do not need all the text and those interested in the detail can obtain it from the references which need to remain in the text.

4. Data analysis. I recommend a statistical reviewer to assess the detailed methods utilised and whether the p-value should be adjusted given multiple comparisons. The text does not describe an adequate Bonferroni methodology and adjusting to 0.01 may not be correct.

Results

Nice and concise.

Paragraph 2 and 3 and 4 amend premature to preterm.

Discussion

Paragraph 4. Why include fenwick’s paper when the effect did not persist after controlling for confounders. Need to rewrite this as a nonsignificant result.

Paragraph 7 commencing “Despite reports that fear of birth...” After controlling for maternal characteristics this was not significant so why not write the sentence simply as a non significant result.

Paragraph 9. Very important. Shorten the rest and make this more prominent.

Paragraph 10 amend premature to preterm

Paragraph 10 there is no evidence to support the comment ‘it is possible the two findings in this study are linked...” Birth management by care providers was not the hypotheses of the manuscript. delete.

Conclusion

Okay apart from amending premature to preterm

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare I have no competing interests