Reviewer’s report

Title: Quality of Prenatal Care Questionnaire: Instrument development and testing

Version: 1 Date: 30 October 2013

Reviewer: Susanne Grylka-Baeschlin

Reviewer’s report:

General aspects

This is an elaborated, very interesting, clearly described and transparent instrument development with testing at different levels. There are some concerns about the structure of the paper. The abstract is structured logically. The main text however has an untypical structure with the study design described in the background chapter and method with result together in the same chapter. Furthermore this leads to differences in the structures between abstract and main text.

In order to get this study ready for publication the authors are kindly asked to restructure the background chapter and to separate methods and results into two chapters.

Background

1. p. 5: The authors describe the purpose of the study at the end of the introductory paragraphs which is in this case in the middle of the background chapter. This is unusual. However, aim and purpose are clear.

Requirement: The authors are kindly asked to provide first the background information followed by aims and purposes of the study.

2. p. 6: There is redundancy with the introduction and the “measurement of prenatal care quality” subchapter. E.g. the last sentence of the first paragraph of the “measurement of prenatal care quality” chapter repeats the first sentence of the second paragraph of the introduction on p. 5.

Requirement: The authors are kindly asked restructure the chapter.

3. p. 9: The subtitle “DESIGN” in the background chapter and all the titles of the subchapter in the discussion chapter are written in a different font (only capital letters) compared to all the other titles of subchapter. This makes the order of chapters and subchapter unclear, especially in the background chapter, where they are mixed.

Requirement: The authors are kindly asked to harmonise the fonts of the titles of the subchapters

4. p. 9: Concerning the content, the study design usually belongs to the method section. Why is it placed in the background chapter?

Requirement: The authors are kindly asked to restructure background and
5. Ethical approval is usually part of the method as well. Why do you place it into the study design subchapter? The authors are kindly asked to restructure background and method chapter.

Methods and results

6. p. 9: Methods and results are treated together for each phase. I can understand that you want to describe phase after phase. However, the combination of method and result in the same chapter is difficult to read even though the steps are very clearly described.

Requirement: The authors are kindly asked to restructure the methods and the results in separate chapters.

7. General comment for this chapter: there is too much textbook knowledge. Please avoid textbook citations. If needed, the authors may refer to specific sentences in a reference. The authors are kindly asked to paraphrase sentences instead of citing.

8. p. 18 to p. 20: classification of Cronbach’s Alpha is inconsistent: Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.94 is acceptable (p. 18, last line), Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.80 is desirable (p. 19, last line), Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.96 is excellent (p. 20, line 6) and Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.81 – 0.93 is acceptable (p. 20, line 7). Could the authors please give a sound reasoning for this procedure?

Tables and Figures

9. p. 28: Why is there a figure legend, however no table legend?

10. Table 2: Vancouver is written on the wrong place, please adjust.

11. Table 2: Parity: Primipara and Mutlipara are not written at the left side as other variables, please adjust.

12. Table 9, first point: the hyphen after 1 is smaller than for the other points.

13. Figure 1, phase 4. The last line is written too much at the right side.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests