Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence and evolution of intimate partner violence before and during pregnancy: a cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: Kathleen Baird

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Title: Prevalence and evolution of intimate partner violence before and during pregnancy: a cross-sectional study

Journal: BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth
Type of article: Research article

The research is original and easily identifiable and understood. The research topic is very important in terms of the effects and outcomes of family violence.

The design and methods of the study is well defined. The methods chosen a cross-sectional study is an appropriate design of the study. The findings of the study add to the literature in already available concerning prevalence rates of intimate partner violence before and during pregnancy.

Methods
Very good response rate for survey 76.7%, and statistical data analysis and findings from the statistical data appear robust – however, please note I am not an statistical expert and this section may benefit from further review.

Most of the data appears to have been collected at a gestational age of 21 weeks, however, violence in pregnancy can begin after this gestation, and this may account for the lower recording rate of violence during pregnancy in the study. The lower recording rates may also be attributed to the 25% of women who did not complete the survey.

Overall the findings and results are presented in an unbiased manner with a clear discussion to support findings. Conclusions are valid and result directly from the data.

The manuscript is well organised and logical however there are instances where the syntax can be improved. For example page 2 lines 29/30 the sentence is unclear and requires rewriting I feel word bigger is not appropriate – consider using ‘greater’ and no need for the word ‘as’ also line 26 there are words missing from this sentence inserting the word ‘other ‘ into the sentence will improve the syntax.
Page 3 line 51, add ‘s’ to the word behaviour.

Page 3 line 62 I would rewrite the variations of violence starting for instance instead of using the term ‘starting up’ consider commencement of violence, continuation of violence instead of violence continuing; and termination of violence instead of violence ceasing.

Page 5 line 94 authors reference 24, is cited as a study from Australia yet reference 24 is a study from Brazil?

Also moves from 3rd person to 1st person on page 5. Instead of we consider using ‘this paper will…..’

There are many instances where the grammar in the paper requires attention proof reading the paper will improve this area.

Tables are suitable and organised.

In the main this paper is well written and worthy of publication, however, there is a lot of data reported in the paper. Perhaps the authors should consider making this one paper into two separate papers, as some of the findings are worthy of a deeper discussion and comparison with other literature.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

NO competing interests