Reviewer's report

Title: Determinants of Exclusive Breastfeeding in an urban population of Primiparas in Lebanon: a cross-sectional study

Version: 2 Date: 7 May 2013

Reviewer: Oyindamola Yusuf

Reviewer's report:

Abstract

Background information is too long for an abstract. First sentence is not relevant. WHO recommendation is also not relevant. The most relevant information is that proportion of mothers who exclusively breast feed is low and the determinants of breastfeeding as not been documented in the Middle East.

Results section of the abstract contained too little information as well. More statistics of the factors associated with exclusive breast feeding should be given such as the odds ratios and p values.

Design and data source

More information is necessary on the original RCT. What was the aim of this RCT? Details of sample size and power calculations are also necessary. The sample size of 552 for the cross sectional survey needs to be justified. Since the aim of the RCT was not to determine the predictors of exclusive breastfeeding and was not powered for that, the authors need to show that the sample size of 552 which was from the RCT is also sufficient for the analysis on the determinants of exclusive breastfeeding.

Analysis

Statistical software used should be mentioned. p value <0.1 should be justified. Was there multiple testing? Was the type two error modified? If yes, why?

Results

The number of women who refused to participate and the number who were lost to follow up should be given. It is not enough to say there are no significant differences in the characteristics between these groups without providing the numbers and or percentages.

Line 17 under the results: percentage of term of 91.4% and c section of 46.3% was greater than 100%. Why is this so? What were the denominators used to get these percentages?

Bivariate Analysis

Line 12: This result should start by giving the percentage of mothers between
age 20 and 24yrs who breast fed compared to the other mothers before giving
the p value. It is important to see the effect size before judging with the p value.

The choice of the words "more likely and less likely should be used in the
multiple regression analysis where the odds ratios are reported and not to be
used in the bivariate analysis.

Multivariate analysis

Line 2. Why was intervention arm used as covariate in this analysis? The
background information nor the methods mentioned the description of these
arms. This is a cross sectional study and not the RCT.

Odds ratios should be reported with 95% confidence intervals.

Issue of control group was also mentioned. This is confusing and may be
misleading since it's a cross sectional study and not a report of the original RCT.

Discussion

Authors conclude that the sample of 552 was representative of women in Beirut.
Is this correct? They need to justify this in the methods. Moreover, the women in
this study were recruited from a trial, so how can they really be representative of
women in Beirut?

Discussion includes explanations of the intervention arms, however, these
interventions were not mentioned at all in the background information. There is
really no link between these interventions with the aim of determining factors
associated with exclusive breastfeeding. This information may be deleted or the
authors should properly describe these arms in the background as well as the
methods. This may change the title of the study. So at best, the authors' should
delete information on these arms so that the study can stand as a cross sectional
study.

Conclusion

Authors should not make conclusions outside the scope of study such as
mentioning macro analyses of breastfeeding policies.

Tables

Table 2. Footnote: "not all variables add up to 100% because of missing values".
Why is this so? All missing values should have been subtracted from the original
sample size. All figures in this table should up to the total of the respective
variable in the table, but may not add up to the original sample size. I checked
and saw that they add up but not to the original sample size. This footnote
information is misleading. It should be deleted and replaced with: “all figures do
not add up to original sample size due to missing values”.

Table 3: Unadjusted OR need not be presented. Adjusted OR, 95% CI and p
value is sufficient. Row one of table has reference in front of the variable? What
does this mean? a reference category? This may be misleading and should be
deleted. The reference category can be marked with an asterisk and a footnote
given at the bottom of the table to show that the asterisk is the reference category.

Social support. Reference category here is other. What constitute these others?

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.