Reviewer's report

Title: Trends in birth weight and the prevalence of low birth weight and small-for-gestational-age in Surinamese South Asian babies since 1974: cross-sectional study of three birth cohorts

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Reviewer: Joel G Ray

Reviewer's report:

1. Were children with congenital or chromosomal anomalies included?

2. Clarification is needed on assignment of ethnicity: Are first-generation Surinamese parent(s) of a newborn identified as such if they are listed to have been born in Suriname, or is it by their last name, or both? What about second and third generation?

3. I am concerned that the authors are using the term “Surinamese South Asians”, but Surinam is not a South Asian country. Rather, the Hindustani form about 35% of the population (they are from Indian); the Creoles form 30% (mixed West Africans and Dutch Europeans); and the Javanese are 15% of the population (coming from Indonesia). Thus, are we really sure that they are South Asians, or merely Surinamese? If they are not all South Asians, then the authors need to change the terminology, but also avoid

4. What happens if one parent is Surinamese and the other parent is Dutch Caucasian?

5. The method use to determine gestational age (LMP, or ultrasound) is not mentioned and needs to be.

6. “Low birth weight” (< 2500 g, or < 2200 g, < 2000g) is not really a useful perinatal indicator anymore, and I suggest removing it entirely from the manuscript. The use of SGA (< 10th centile), and/or severe SGA (< 3rd centile) is simply more enlightening and useful, and would keep the paper more focused.

7. Methods, page 8: “... and three ethnic specific standards from three countries: the Netherlands,[17, 18] the United Kingdom[19], and Canada,[20]” # I am not sure which ethnic specific standards they used from Canada , for example: Did they use Canada’s European ancestry curves to compare to the Dutch Caucasian, and Canada’s South Asian curves to compare to the Surinamese? This really needs to be made very clear.

8. While the three time periods of data are available for the Surinamese, only one time period is available for the Dutch Caucasian newborns. I find this to be distracting, and I think that either combining all 3 time periods for the Surinamese can work, or, even better, just use 2006-2009 (as has been done in Figure 1, anyways). Besides, the time trend changes for the birth weights among the Surinamese is not really a focus of the paper (i.e., not an important objective).
9. Table 2, “% SGA”: I think that they should have a Figure (Forest plot, for example), that shows prevalence ratios and 95% CIs.

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

**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