Reviewer's report

Title: Changes in the Determinants of Exclusive Breastfeeding in Nepal: Comparison of National Surveys 2006 and 2011

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Reviewer: Sara Filoche

Reviewer's report:

This paper describes key social determinants and health indicators on the proportions of infants exclusively breastfed up to the age of 6 months in Nepal, based on two surveys carried out in 2006 and 2011. There are some interesting findings presented in the study, and novel aspects (e.g. father’s influence) included, and described in social and cultural context for Nepal, which will help inform health policy and breastfeeding programs in Nepal.


Major Compulsory Revisions

Overall:

Additional description of the outcome measures and exposure variables is needed. Clarify primary and secondary outcomes. Power calculations? How has missing data been handled (note on Tables also needed)

Minor Essential Revisions

Overall:

Replace children with infants throughout

Check the use of rate, more accurate to use proportion.

Ensure consistent use of comparison of two surveys between 2006 and 2011 - rather than between 2006 and 2011 as it implies that the study is a longitudinal one.

Check for double spacing (could use paragraph button, or find and replace); consistency of and and & and abbreviation order.

Abstract

1. Rephrasing for clarity and ease of reading
2. An advantage of this study is including the father’s perspective which needs highlighting.
3. Clarify the objectives. Not for children, rather the mother’s perspective, the outcome measure is the proportion of children being EBF up to 6 months of age. The exposure variables are...
4. Need to add determinants, or at least key examples.
5. Delete spacing and then change year to years

6. Change to the EBF rates were higher in 2011 compared 2006 (it is not a multiple repeated measure, as you are not sure what happened in the intervening years).

7. Delete which to live births part of last sentence, as it is not measurable in current study and an overstatement

Background: Rationale for including men’s information to be included in the study.

8. Clarify the objectives, outcome measures. Not a rate measure, rather changes in proportions/numbers

9. Define MDGs

10. Change essential to important

11. Remove paragraph on media influences to Discussion if relevant to discuss results in relation to this

12. Change between 2006 to 2011 to …EBF in 2006 compared to 2011

Methods: Needs more description and referencing over all.

13. Clarify what instruments are.

14. Change to make it uniform, to, for consistency

Study instruments: Explain. Expand on information for women and men’s information

15. How were the questionnaires validated? Example of questions asked.

Data extraction and analysis: Needs title change, data extraction not discussed.

16. What are the odds ratio adjusted for?

17. What are the confounders?

18. References, particularly for the backward elimination and further explanation

Definition of variables

19. Delete space between breastfeeding and among, and use EBF

20. Question whether ethnicity is linked to what appears to be an SES status. What is this classification based on? Reference?

Results: Remove all reference of Table explains, and change to, describes. Explain throughout what factors were controlled for. Consistent use of & and and in parentheses and elsewhere, remove & and use and

21. Delete the word spacing between births

22. Sentence from thus to on EBF to be removed as is discussion of results.

23. Change It motivated us, to these results led to the development of another regression model…delete with an aim to get a further insight, and change to, to determine the association…

24. Delete the sentence, a more accurate rate of EBF as this is Discussion.
Discussion: An introductory sentence is needed to summarise what was done for the study and results. Rephrasing of concluding statements, as overstated e.g. This presents a major challenge. Better to state – Our findings suggest that achieving the WHO/UNICEF of EBF for six months is challenging.

25. Add benefits to long term.
26. Delete the benefits of EBF are well known.
27. Better to state that EBF confers protection against, and remove crucial in protecting infants from
28. Overstatement...that can be attributable, change can to could in part be. Delete positive. Delete last sentence of this paragraph as already stated.
29. Highlight the fact that father’s perspective is novel. Bring to the forefront more, without overstating.
30. Significant predictors of what? Length of infant being EBF?
31. Obesity needs to be in a separate paragraph and discussed in relation to results, if relevant, this reviewer questions the relevance of this section. Are women in the present study overweight?

Conclusions:
32. Delete during, and replace with, in both 2006 and 2011. Consider deleting the sentence starting therefore all breastfeeding programs or explain further
33. Change breastfed to breastfeed
34. Delete space between that and the
35. Change were to was, in expected to follow
36. Rephrase sentence, It should be noted that mother-in-laws…to something like, Older women in Nepalese communities, such as the mother-in-laws, generally have low levels of formal education.....therefore breastfeeding promotion programs....would benefit from including this demographic in these programs. Why is this strategy more likely to prevent early cessation in EBF among the male infants?
37. Last sentence, would suggest changing to something like: The results from this study has highlighted some key social determinants for the continuation of EBF to six months and beyond, which would warrant further investigation.

Tables
38. Check tables for grammar and sentence construction.
39. Change rate to proportion for all relevant.
40. Check appropriate use of N vs n in all Tables

Table 1 legend, remove among under, and replace with, in infants 6 months of age and under by...
41. Check Ethnicity, explain how it is by advantage.

Table 2 legend, as Table 1. Suggest change to: Proportion (%) of exclusive breastfeeding in infants 6 months of age and under by select health indicators
and obstetric outcomes. Modify in main text also as appropriate. Change:
42. Birth order to Parity (and in main text with explanation),
43. Time between birth events
44. Type of pregnancy to Plurality
45. Add unit of size of infant
46. Define pre-lacteal feed in text
47. Explain Time wanted. Unit of Anaemia measure. ANC abbreviation? Add
48. Move Frequency of reading a newspaper, watching television and listening to radio to Table 1

Table 3 and 4 Further information of the legend is needed. Would question whether excluding non-significant results is appropriate for this study.
Table 5. Further information of the legend is needed.
Table 6. Reword legend, suggest: Changes in the proportions of exclusively breastfed infants by significant social and health indicator determinants.
49. Change no previous birth to parity status.
Table 7 Change prevalence to proportion

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

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

**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