Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence and Associated Factors of Post Partum Depression and Anxiety in two Peri-urban Communities of Karachi, Pakistan: A Quasi-experimental Study

Version: 1 Date: 3 April 2009

Reviewer: Emma Robertson Blackmore

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Page 2, Abstract, Methods. The abstract states that women were interviewed either at 36 weeks gestation or within 10 days of delivery. In the abstract and text, it would be helpful to know the number of women that fell into each of these groups.

2. Page 2, Abstract, Results. The term 'prevalence' is imprecise, the authors need to clearly state within the abstract and text exactly what they mean by prevalence or use specific terms such as 'point prevalence'. The authors also use caseness as an outcome so need to differentiate between the terms.

3. Page 2, Abstract, Methods & Results. The authors state that women were assessed for anxiety at 4 time points in the postpartum period, however they do not report the percentage of women meeting their definition of anxiety/depression for these data points. These are very important data that need to be included and discussed.

4. Page 5, last paragraph. The following sentence does not make sense; "Study area and mother's age were also included in the multivariable analysis for their biological importance". Specifically, how are age and study area of biological relevance? This is repeated on page 7, 3rd paragraph.

5. Results section. As previously stated, it is not clear why the authors haven't examined changes in anxiety/depression scores across time. For example, did the onset of symptoms cluster within the first few months of childbirth or persist out into the first year?

6. Page 8, Discussion. The authors raise interesting points about the stigma attached to mental illness in Pakistan, and the fact that they had such a good response rate and women stayed in the study is a strength of the work that should be highlighted.

7. Page 8, Discussion, 5th paragraph. I would not necessarily agree that breastfeeding, and unplanned pregnancy are life events as studied previously, however the authors need to discuss the differences between risk factors found in Western, primarily Caucasian women and those findings from other studies.
from Pakistan or non-Western studies and the research and clinical implications of their findings.

8. General analysis / Tables. It would be really useful if the authors could indicate statistically significant differences between groups (i.e. those women who dropped out of the study versus those that stayed in) in the tables, using an asterisk or other notation. One issue that springs to mind is whether the women who were more anxious or depressed dropped out.

Table 1 - education of the husband - can the authors please define 'matric' as I am unfamiliar with the term.

Table 3 - how is prevalence defined? I am not sure how to interpret the figures.

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

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.