Reviewer's report

Title: Pattern and predictors of maternal care-seeking practices for severe neonatal jaundice in Nigeria: a multi-centre survey

Version: 2 Date: 23 April 2014

Reviewer: Joseph U Onakewhor

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REVIEWER'S COMMENTS

Major Compulsory Revisions – None

Minor Essential Revisions

1. TITLE: Accepted; Desired correction has been made

2. ABSTRACT: Accepted; Desired correction has been made

3. METHODS:

Paragraph 1:

i). 1st sentence: “….Abuja (Northern Nigeria), Lagos (Southwest, Nigeria) and Port Harcourt (Southeast, Nigeria)…”

Authors’ response: “The sites are described by their approximate geographical locations rather than geopolitical zones;” Comment accepted

ii). Ethical Consideration:

The authors replied:

“The nature of the study, is essentially an opinion survey which did not require any medical tests/investigation or retrieval of medial (authors meant ‘medical’) information from hospital records.”

They said also: “…the study design which did not entail any prophylactic, diagnostic or therapeutic interventions…” “We therefore did not consider it mandatory seek additional formal IRB approval after obtaining the approval from the lead institution.”

The assumption was erroneous except the IRB of the ‘lead institution’ has powers of a national ethics committee. Even if it has, asking for waivers from the
IRBs of the participating institutions would have been appropriate.

The authors reported in the Result Section; Paragraph 3:

“Although majority (89.1%) of the mothers reported full recovery in the affected infants, 9 (7.0%) mothers reported neonatal deaths and 3 (2.3%) mothers reported recovery with some sequelae.”

There were elements of recall of ‘bad experiences’ which goes beyond “opinion survey” only. The recall can cause emotional trauma to some respondents who might have required re-counseling or other forms of therapy.

Recommendation:

Under the present circumstance,

“Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethical Committee of the Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Lagos, Nigeria (the lead/coordinating institution) and ‘informal department approval was secured at the two other centres before the administration of the survey’ ”

as stated by the authors should be accepted as proxy.

4. RESULTS:
Comments acceptable

DISCUSSION
Satisfactory

CONCLUSION
Comments acceptable

FINAL RECOMMENDATION BY THE REVIEWER

This questionnaire-based study is relevant and provides evidence for more public awareness campaigns and interventions.

Please accept for publication after addressing the issue raised.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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’

Signed: Prof. Joseph Onakewhor

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

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'I declare that I have no competing interests'