Reviewer's report

Title: Malaria parasitaemia and clinical disease in pregnant women at first clinic visit in the mount Cameroon Area

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Reviewer: Stephanie K. Yanow

Reviewer's report:

Summary

In this work, the authors surveyed pregnant women attending their first ANC visit. Women attending scheduled visits were compared with those who presented for unscheduled visits. Asymptomatic and symptomatic malaria infections were compared between these groups. Additional, the authors studies social, educational (knowledge of MiP) and environment factors that were associated with malaria infection in pregnancy and identified certain risk factors.

Major compulsory revisions

1. The authors defined a number of associations but some of these are not presented clearly or cohesively. For example, did women with knowledge of MiP present more frequently at scheduled or unscheduled visits? Did they have their first ANC visit earlier than the women without knowledge of MiP? Similarly, IPT usage is listed in Table 3 but there is no mention of related outcomes (ie, were they parasitemic, febrile, etc?).

2. On page 10, lines 210-211, the authors refer to a population of 51 women but it is not clear who these women represent. In the previous lines they mention 68 women were parasitemic.

3. The long discussion of WBCs in the Discussion does not appear to be directly relevant to the findings presented. Although the authors show a difference in WBC counts, the women were not anemic. I believe the WBC result is minor point.

4. Why wasn’t gravidity alone a factor associated with parasitemia? This differs from previous studies and should be explained in the Discussion.

5. It would be clearer if the data presented in table 4 show the individual variables and associated odds ratios rather in order to justify the conclusions presented on page 12.

Minor essential revisions

1. Please convert 30,000 FCFA to USD for reference.

2. There are some minor typographical errors throughout the text.

3. The pink and white banding in Tables 1, 3 and 4 do not clearly delineate the
different types of data presented. These should be modified for clarity.
4. Figure 1 does not add very much to the data already present in the text and could be removed.

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:
No competing interests.