Author's response to reviews

Title: Risk factors for antepartum stillbirth: a case-control study in Nepal

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1. Title etc.: the term "case-referent study" is correct, and on theoretical grounds perhaps even preferable over "case-control" - but the latter is much more common, and the average reader is much more likely to understand its meaning. Consider replacing "case-referent" by "case-control" throughout.
Response: We have now replaced the case-referent study by case-control study in line 1, 34, 91 and 258.

2. "Antepartum stillbirth prevention strategies that can be used to identify high-risk pregnancies have not been successful" Consider replacing by "strategies based on the identification of high-risk pregnancies have not been successful in prevention antepartum stillbirth", which expresses more clearly what you presumably want to say.
Response: We have now replaced "antepartum stillbirth prevention strategies that can be used to identify high-risk pregnancies have not been successful" with "strategies based on the identification of high-risk pregnancies have not been successful in prevention antepartum stillbirth"

3. "This study had a case-referent design" - please replace "a" by "an unmatched".
Response: In line 95, "a case-referent design" has been replaced by “an unmatched case-control design”

4. "Any woman admitted to the hospital for delivery was marked in the surveillance registry, added to the source population, and given a random allocation using a lottery technique." The term "random allocation" is normally used in RCTs and describes the recruitment into a trial arm - here, the term "random selection" would be more appropriate. For instance: "Any woman admitted to the hospital for delivery was marked in the surveillance registry. From
this sampling frame, study participants were randomly selected using a lottery technique."

Response: In line 127, we have replaced random allocation with “From this sampling frame, study participants were randomly selected using a lottery technique”

5. The term "semi-structured interview forms" is a bit confusing. Semi-structured interviews are a data collection technique used in qualitative research, which does not use questionnaires but interview guidelines. Perhaps better: "questionnaires with open questions" or whatever the authors used for their interviews.

Response: In line 135, the term “semi-structured interview form” has been replaced with “questionnaire”

6. Is "ethnicity" the correct term for castes - would "social class" not be a more appropriate translation of the caste concept?

Response: Since, social class or hierarchical system is broadly termed as caste/ethnicity in Nepal, so have added caste in line 148 for clarification.

7. "Comparing the mean ... of the maternal age in years for the two populations was done using Pearson's chi-square." I believe the Pearson's chi-square is used for comparing proportions, not means - please double check and correct as appropriate.

Response: In line 198, the mistake made in mentioning statistical test as pearson's chi-square is replaced with t-test.

8. Methods: Provide a sample size calculation. If the sample size was fixed, provide a power determination - i.e. report which OR the study has the power of, say, 80% to identify as significant at the, say, 5% significance level. Usually it is not necessary to present the formula, but the assumptions should be stated.

Response: In line 208 and 209, we have added the sample size calculation as following “The sample size for the study was based on the main study to detect the 20% reduction in perinatal mortality with statistical power of 80% and level of significance at 5%”

9. The acronyms cOR and aOR are not (yet) so widely known that an explanation is unnecessary - please explain their meaning in the text when used for the first time.

Response: We have explained cOR as crude Odds Ratio in line 228 and table 3. And explained aOR as adjusted Odds Ratio in table 4.

10. Table 4, footnote: it is not wrong but not strictly necessary to repeat how variables were selected into the model - but it would be helpful to say that the aOR has been adjusted for all other variables in the table - if that is what has happened.
Response: We have made necessary change in table 4 footnote replacing the “Multivariate logistic regression analysis to determine the likelihood of antepartum stillbirth, adjusted for those background characteristics which were significantly different (p<0.01) between the case and referent populations” with “aOR has been adjusted to maternal age, educational status of mother, parity, previous stillbirth, antenatal care, socio-economic status, antepartum hemorrhage, hypertensive disorder during pregnancy and small for gestation age in the table which had cOR>1.”