Reviewer’s report

Title: Milk ejection patterns: an intra-individual comparison of breastfeeding and pumping

Version: 2 Date: 29 May 2015

Reviewer: Wendy Brodribb

Reviewer’s report:

This was an interesting paper that further elucidates the functioning of the milk-ejection reflex.

I only have a small number of minor essential revisions.

1. Ln 137 Is it meant to be 10±12%? That would mean that the lowest value is a negative %

And discretionary revisions

Background

2. Ln 87-88. The first part of this para discusses the reasons women may need to express their milk and this sentence then discusses the different stimulus between breastfeeding and pumping. It seems to equate all expressing with pumping. I would suggest that a sentence be added to explain that women can express milk by hand, hand pump and by electric pump. This paper will only be discussing expressing using an electric breast pump.

Materials and methods

3. It is not 100% clear whether the max comfortable vacuum was ascertained before the experiment started, or during the experiment.

4. Ln 174 Was the opposite breast to the one being fed from scanned?

Results

5. Ln 227 I wonder if there is a better way of expressing the findings than saying ‘within mothers’ – maybe ‘for individual mothers’ if this is what you mean - or just say there was no significant different in the duration of milk ejections between breastfeeding or pumping in this population.

Discussion

6. Ln 247 the time to initial milk ejection is not statically significant, but even if it was, would it be clinically significant?

7. Ln 258 Which study? Kent’s or this one.

8. Could different types of pumps and stimulation patterns play a big part in any differences between the effect of pumping and breastfeeding? Should this be addressed in the study limitations?

9. Ln 301 ‘This indicates that the amount of oxytocin released at milk ejection surpasses the threshold required to stimulate milk ejection’ does not make
sense. I assume the first milk ejection is discussing the milk ejection reflex, while the second is about milk moving - but it does need to be clearer for readers.

10. Ln 308 The sentence beginning on this line does not make sense.

11. Ln 325 Information about the multiple sessions was not mentioned in the results section. I also don't know how you have multiple breastfeeding sessions ‘within a woman’. Must be a better way of describing it.

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests