Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prevalence and predictors of unintended pregnancy among women: an analysis of the Canadian Maternity Experiences Survey

Authors:

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Author’s response to reviews:

BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth
BioMed Central
236 Gray’s Inn Road
London WC1X 8HB
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August 1, 2015

Dear Dr. Nawsheen Boodhun,

Please find enclosed a copy of our revised manuscript titled “Prevalence and predictors of unintended pregnancy among women: an analysis of the Canadian Maternity Experiences Survey ” co-authored by Oulman E, Kim T, Yunis K, and Tamim H to be published in BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth.

First of all, we wish to thank you for the suggestions and advice from the journal’s reviewers. It has improved the paper; particularly addressing the issue of the nearly 10 year-old MES database used for the present study as a limitation. Although the MES database was surveyed back in 2006, it is the first and currently only data devoted to maternal characteristics and pregnancy in Canada. We continue to believe this study has important implications for public health strategies targeting mothers of all age, particularly those who did not intend for a pregnancy. With these results, public health organizations will be better equipped at targeting interventions aimed at preventing unintended pregnancies, thus reducing the health risk for the mother and her newborn.

All editorial requests and reviewer comments were addressed as follows:

Editorial Requests:

Request 1:
Ethics: If your study involves humans, human data or animals, then your article should contain an ethics statement which includes the name of the committee that approved your study. If ethics was not required for your study, then this should be clearly stated and a rationale provided. Author’s comment: Ethics was not required for our study and a rationale is provided in the methods section under subheading database. The Maternity Experiences Survey database requires permission to be granted through an application process submitted to Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada.

Request 2:

Consent: If your article is a prospective study involving human participants then your article should include a statement detailing consent for participation. If individual clinical data is presented in your article, then you must clarify whether consent for publication of these data was obtained.

Author’s comment: Consent was not required as the study was based on secondary analysis of the MES database collected by Statistics Canada.

Request 3: Availability of supporting data: BioMed Central strongly encourages all data sets on which the conclusions of the paper rely be either deposited in publicly available repositories (where available and appropriate) or presented in the main papers or additional supporting files, in machine-readable format whenever possible. Authors must include an Availability of Data and Materials section in their article detailing where the data supporting their findings can be found. The Accession Numbers of any nucleic acid sequences, protein sequences or atomic coordinates cited in the manuscript must be provided and include the corresponding database name.

Author’s comment: The availability of data and where the data supporting our findings are now indicated in the methods section.

Request 4:

Authors Contributions: Your 'Authors Contributions' section must detail the individual contribution for each individual author listed on your manuscript.

Author’s comment: Authors contribution section can be found on Page 9.

Reviewer #1: Kathleen Marion Baird, PhD

Comment 1: The insights this research paper offers have clear clinical application for midwifery practice and for exploring the discourse around the prevalence of unintended pregnancy. [...] However, the data from which these outcomes have emerged is now nearly 10 years old and therefore I am unclear if the authors have tried to find any more up to date Canadian Statistics. At the very least it would be helpful if the authors could provide an explanation as to why they are using data which is now quite old and whether is it is robust enough. For instance has the Canadian Maternity Experiences Survey been repeated again since 2006? I think including such a statement would be beneficial.

Author’s comment: We have provided an explanation as to why 2006 version of the MES has been used for analysis in the methods (database) section and in the final paragraph of the discussion section. This is
Currently the first and only database devoted to maternal health and characteristics around pregnancy, birth, labour, and post-partum.

Comment 2: One very important is a consideration around the difference between an unplanned and unwanted pregnancy and an unplanned and but wanted pregnancy, some discussion around this point would be beneficial. The authors should make some acknowledgement to this.

Author’s comment: We have used both terms (i.e., unplanned and unwanted) interchangeably throughout the manuscript. However, we understand that there may be potential for misclassification bias of the outcome and thus, address it in the final paragraph of the discussion section.

Comment 3:

Introduction Page 2 Line 8 – 10: Authors made a very broad sweeping statement in their opening sentence - what exactly are the 'dangerous consequences' both to mother and to her newborn, this requires much more explanation. Perhaps a better use of terms to utilise would be 'adverse outcomes'.

Author’s comment: Reviewer’s suggestion was applied – text was replaced with “adverse outcomes” throughout the manuscript.

Comment 4: Line 25: consider another term instead of 'needs to be done' consider more research is 'required' or 'carried out'

Author’s comment: Reviewer’s suggestion was applied.

Comment 5: Line 37: this line is slightly confusing - I think it is confusion is related to the syntax in the sentence ‘27% of Canadian mothers perceived their pregnancy as unintended, meaning that they wanted the pregnancy later or not at all.’ Consider changing to ‘27% of Canadian mothers perceived their pregnancy to be as unintended, meaning that they would have preferred the pregnancy to be later or even not at all’.

Author’s comment: Reviewer’s suggestion was applied.

Comment 6: Page 3 Line 41: please include the array of studies that the authors allude too.

Author’s comment: Reviewer’s suggestion was applied. References were added.

Comment 7: Line 44 – 47: would be included in the conclusion.

Author’s comment: Reviewer’s suggestion was applied and this sentence was included in the conclusion.

Comment 8: Line 48 consider changing term ' looking at' consider using examine or explore

Author’s comment: Reviewer’s suggestion was applied – text replaced with the word “exploring”.

Comment 9:

Discussion: The first paragraph from line 35 is a repeat of the findings chapter and the authors should consider revising this paragraph.

Author’s comment: The discussion section was reviewed and slightly modified to reduce the repeat of findings.

Comment 10: Page 7 line 5: 'suggesting that this data may be out-dated' should be included as a limitation.

Author’s comment: We have provided an explanation as to why 2006 version of the MES has been used for analysis in the methods (database) section and in the final paragraph of the discussion section. This is currently the first and only database devoted to maternal health and characteristics around pregnancy, birth, labour, and post-partum.

Reviewer #3: Hanan Al-Kadri

Comment 1: The scope of the work is limited and it is applicable only on Canadian population. The authors need to justify and elaborate how this work can benefit wider range of readers.

Author’s comment: We have included a justification and elaborated on how it can benefit others in the final paragraph of the discussion section.

Comment 2:

Introduction: lines 8-10: after reference 1, it appears that the authors have continued with the unintended pregnancy definition... "and can result .......her newborn". It is either they move the reference till the end of the sentence or add a reference for this statement.

Author’s comment: We have moved the reference to the end of the sentence.

Comment 3:

Methods: The presented data is almost 10 years old. The authors need to clearly justify the validity of this data after this period of time and the reason behind its delayed publication particularly that the authors themselves are admitting that part of their data might be outdated in page 7 lines 4-5.

Author’s comment: We have provided an explanation as to why 2006 version of the MES has been used for analysis in the methods (database) section and in the final paragraph of the discussion section. This is currently the first and only database devoted to maternal health and characteristics around pregnancy, birth, labour, and post-partum.

Comment 4: Page 7 line 40: the word "healthy" need to be changed to "health".
Author’s comment: Reviewer’s suggestion was applied.

Thank you for all your suggestions. We look forward to hearing from you as you appraise this manuscript for publication.

Sincerely,

Theresa HM Kim, Msc
York University
Toronto, Canada