Reviewer’s report

Title: EPIDURAL ANALGESIA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN THE MATERNAL HEALTH IN A LOW PARITY COMMUNITY

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Reviewer: Georg-Friedrich von Tempelhoff

Reviewer's report:

In this large prospective trial feto/maternal outcome was assessed depending on the use of epidural analgesia (EA) compared to no EA during labor, whereas the rate of severe perineal tears was indifferent but abdominal/vaginal instrumental delivery and abnormal foetal head position was more often associated with EA.

While in the USA the rate of EA during labor is as much as ~ 60 % or higher, in European countries the range is in between 20 to 30 % or even lower because of the fear of prolonged labor. Are there any results to this question in the current trial?

Some more information about the indication, procedure and time-point of EA in particular is warranted such as obstetrical status at the time of insertion (e.g. early vs. late insertion), which potentially can influence results

The discussion starts: "...The most relevant results in this present study are: epidural analgesia is an independent risk factor for severe perineal tears, but not for instrumental delivery, caesarean section and abnormal foetal head position at delivery." (isn’t the opposite the case).

Table 5: Interestingly, besides not using EA, a higher fetal weight (>4.000 g) was found to be another independent risk reducer for "abnormal head position" - how does this explain?

I was wondering if women included in this analysis have given a written informed consent to participate in this study?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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