Reviewer's report

Title: Mother-Infant Bonding is not Associated with Feeding Type: A Community Study Sample

Version: 2 Date: 03 Jul 2018

Reviewer: Jill Demirci

Reviewer's report:

It seems the premise/hypothesis this paper endeavors to answer is not supported by methods (relationship between mother-infant bonding and breastfeeding). It follows then that the conclusion of the paper is faulty—that breastfeeding is not associated with mother-infant bonding. Authors appeared to have only measured potential mother-infant relationship disorders/dysfunction by utilizing the PBQ, not quality of the maternal-infant bond (positive/prosocial relationship). I think prior reviewers tried to point this out. I'm not sure this can be remedied, except if the authors completely change focus of paper to report on what they actually measured. This is an important distinction, as it completely reverses authors conclusion. By showing no relationship, the appropriate conclusion is that breastfeeding is not associated with maternal-infant relationship disorders/bonding dysfunction.

Other concerns include the confusion around "controlling" for age of infant in analyses. Tables do not stand alone to facilitate understanding how infant age was factored in—all should have a footnote describing. Also, classifications of partial and exclusive breastfeeding are not described. Can a 9 month old be exclusively breastfed for example (usually they are getting solid foods by that point—or did you just mean no formula)? I'm not sure if "past breastfeeding" excludes those who are currently breastfeeding or how categories are delineated (is the exclusive/partial just for current breastfeeding?). Table 3: it took awhile to understand that your top x axis corresponded to respective number down y axis (why the point in front of the number (e.g., .1 instead of 1)? Why no correlations with #13-16?).

There remain numerous typographical and grammatical errors throughout which require a careful read-through and proofing. Several statements in intro don't give full story/seem to be misleading: that breastfeeding only facilitates bonding through skin-to-skin contact (what about pulsatile oxytocin at time of let-down), also that mother's milk was deemed nutritionally superior throughout 19th and 20th centuries (in fact up to 1950's/1960's the "tailored" formulas—e.g., Liebig's, prescribed by physicians thought to be equal or better than mother's own milk).

Methods of recruitment require clarification under "procedure" section. Authors write that women were recruited "soon after birth OR via internet ads..." is this an either/or? How were they recruited using the snowball method? Regarding description of PBQ in methods, what do the "cut off points" signify—what are they cut-offs for?
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.

Unable to assess

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 recommend additional statistical review

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