Reviewer’s report

Title: The Cedar Project: Using Indigenous-Specific Determinants of Health to Predict Substance Use among Young Pregnant-Involved Indigenous Women in Canada

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Reviewer: Eeva Ekholm

Reviewer's report:

The scope of the study is interesting, how social determinants of health influence alcohol and drug use during a woman’s life span. The author’s state that the question of substance use during pregnancy should be broadened to use before, during and after pregnancy. I agree with the author’s view. The article is interesting and well-written.

However, there are several methodological limitations in this study.

The term pregnant involved comprises a methodological problem. How big a share of the women 14-30 years in this studied population does this "pregnant involved" include?

Study question 1 asks what are the contexts of lives of pregnant-involved young Aboriginal women who use alcohol and drugs? It would be important to compare these determinants with women who have not become pregnant or who do not use drugs. As it is, the manuscript is a description of a high risk subpopulation of aboriginal women. How do the women who have stayed clear of drugs differ in relation to the described risk factors? If the research question is the life context of this risk group, it would at least be important to know when they were pregnant and did they give birth and take care of the baby. Substance abuse earlier and later in life may have different determinants.

The Cedar project has published papers this year about social determinants of substance use among young pregnant-involved Indigenous women in Canada and quantitative analysis of these women's experiences and self representations. Did these studies serve as a ground for the present study with quantitative design? The authors do not, however, refer to these previous reports? Also previous findings on these data on pregnant-involved substance abusing women would be important to convey to the readers.

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.
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?
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I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
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