Reviewer's report

Title: Traumatic events: Exploring associations with maternal depression, infant bonding, and oxytocin in Latina mothers

Version: 2 Date: 02 Nov 2017

Reviewer: Tiffany A. Moore Simas

Reviewer's report:

I want to extend my sincerest thanks to the authors for the opportunity to review this manuscript. This study explored the association of child/adult/birth traumatic experiences, maternal-infant bonding, postpartum depression, and oxytocin levels, specifically in a Latina population. I would suggest the following revisions:

Abstract:

- Given the small sample size and stated exploratory nature of the study, the conclusions are too strong and should be pared back. Certainly additional work in this area is merited.

Background:

- Last 2 sentences of paragraph 1 are saying the same thing only making a distinction between 'traumatic histories' and 'IPV histories' - as IPV history is arguably a traumatic history (as indicated in the 3 sentence of this paragraph), the distinction between these two sentences is not clear and thus confusing. Please clarify and/or condense.

Methods:

- Participants Section
  - Remove last sentence to results section, include % breast versus bottle feed
  - Include eligibility/ineligibility criteria

- Procedure section would benefit from a figure depicting what data was collected at which time points:
  - Third trimester enrollment (face to face) - demographics, depr/anx, trauma hx
- Measures

  - The abstract indicates that higher scores on the PBQ represent more compromised bonding however the measures section does not elaborate on this. It is worth repeating here and potentially elsewhere in manuscript as many readers will not be familiar with this scale

  - Clarify on p. 10 line 41 whether women fed their infant using either bottle or breast for 10 minutes as per their personal preference or whether this was assigned by the study

- Data analysis section

  - The penultimate sentence in this section mentioned the exploratory nature of this study - this merits mention earlier as part of background and again at start of discussion

Results:

- It is hard to put the high rates of PPD in context when eligibility/ineligibility criteria are not provided. Additionally, as previously noted would move demographics of participants here as there are several associated with increased risk PPD and thus these in addition to focus on Latina population provides some insight. This merits discussion in the discussion section.

- P. 13 - line 26 - the authors refer to the 'number' of infant-related traumatic events - was this really a number of a categorical yes/no variable?

- As IPV is being pointed out specifically in results and discussion, consider adding a relevant column to the table

Discussion:

- Given the small numbers, exploratory nature of study and numerous comparisons. . .the study discussion should start by addressing this again.
- See prior note regarding high rates of PPD - would be worthwhile adding relevant literature when stating that these rates surpass those of the general population

- Consider discussion point ref role of breast/bottle feeding in results

- Consider collecting data on exogenous oxytocin exposure (e.g. labor induction, labor augmentation, and/or postpartum hemorrhage prevention) and comment to how this exposure may/may not alter these results

Other:

- There are some minor occasional grammatical errors - please review.

- The term infant trauma focuses the reader on the infant rather than on the mother's experience, consider renaming birth-outcome related traumatic events are something that implies that it is the mother's experience of the event that is relevant

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

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.
Yes

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:
Acceptable
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal.