Reviewer’s report

Title: Neonatal, Infant, and Child Mortality Among Women Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence in East Africa: A Multi-Country Analysis

Version: 1 Date: 02 May 2019

Reviewer: Angela Taft

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Memiah et al, Neonatal etc BMC Women's Health

Please add page numbers!

Abstract

1. Consider adding to the end of your final sentence...infants and children in East Africa and the wellbeing and safety of their mothers.

Methods

2. P.3 Line 21, you have the Kenya number twice - 2432.

3. Flow reads better now with the Conceptual fw, but it is unclear how you used it. It would be better to make mention of which SES and other variables you considered distal etc. It shouldn't take up too much space.

4. P.5 3rd para, line 44 'neonatal' not 'meonatal'

5. Table 2 - explain why you have set BMI at over or under 18, as my reading of the East Asian mean BMI is well over 20. It is very low. Unless you can justify it, please remove it, as too many will fit into the over 18 category as that is the population mean.

Results

6. Table 3- given that you have detailed the sample within each country now in the text and elsewhere, ok to just give total n on top of tables - not all country Ns detailed.

7. Table 3. My suggestion would be to place th IPV finding at the top of the whole table, as this is the focus of your study - not half way down the table after SES stats.
8. Suggest you asterisk all significant findings in this table. Too much burden for the reader otherwise.

9. Characteristics of women who experienced IPV. Suggest your comment reports that factors associated with SES disadvantage more commonly associated with IPV, such as poverty, young age at first birth etc - and then comment under the categories in your table - health system factors e.g. no antenatal care, delivery by non HCPs.

10. Table 5 is difficult to follow, as you have again buried your major variable (IPV) of interest under maternal factors. Move it to top of the table 5. Please put a double line to demarcate unadj from adj analyses. Please see if you can include the label for Table 5 within the table.

Discussion


12. You still claim a relationship between artificially 'low' or 'high' BMI and you have not justified your choice of cut-off.

13. You also misquote the findings for contraception, as Maxwell et al (ref 28) find the opposite, and your findings do not test this, only that women who use contraceptives are less likely to have poor pregnancy outcomes. This section needs rewriting. It is more common that women who experience IPV are less likely to be permitted to use contraceptives, although some may be more likely to use it for the reasons you give.

14. You have not incorporated the WHO guidance about a whole of health system response.

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.

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

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