Reviewer’s report

Title: Measuring Mistreatment of Women during Childbirth: A Review of Terminology and Methodological Approaches

Version: 0 Date: 25 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Nada Amroussia

Reviewer’s report:

The paper addresses an interesting topic. It adds a needed insight into the best methodological approaches to assess mistreatment of women during childbirth. Please find below the specific comments and suggestions.

-Abstract:

1. I suggest reviewing the aims. They do not correspond to the aims stated in the text.

-Background

2. Lines 27-28/page 3: references are needed.
3. Line 32/page3: references are needed.
4. Lines 33-38/page 3: there is no contradiction between the two statements.
5. Line 55/page 3: you mentioned that Latin America and the Caribbean is "a region notable for social inequalities and inequitable access to quality maternal health care", maybe you can elaborate more on this point, especially that the study focuses on this region.
6. The aims of the study are not clear.
7. Line 9/page 4: I am not sure about the use of the expression "we hope", it would be better to reformulate this sentence.

-Methods

8. Line 21/page 4: why did you choose the period 2000-2017?
9. How many studies were included in the review and how many of them were excluded? This is not clear.
10. How many studies/legal documents focusing on Latin America and the Caribbean were analyzed?

11. Maybe you can add some subheadings to help organizing the method section (search strategy, inclusion/exclusion criteria, data analysis/synthesis)

-Results

Terminology and definitions of mistreatment

12. Maybe you can start by presenting the studies/documents reviewed as you did in the second section "measurement of mistreatment".

13. Lines 53/54/page 4: Did you cite all terms used or only the most frequent ones?

14. Lines 14-15/page 5: could you give some examples of "the individual, structural and policy level drivers" of disrespect and abuse described by Freedman and Kruk.

15. Lines 27-28/page 5: it would be helpful to cite (briefly) the rights stated in the Respectful Maternity Care Charter (or give some examples of these rights).

16. Line 5/page 6: could you provide more information about the operationalization of mistreatment by WHO

17. Line 12/page 6: it would be helpful to add a subheading; for example "Terminology and definitions of mistreatment in Latin America and Caribbean".

18. Line 58/page 6: the sentence is incomplete. An explanation of the "structural level of mistreatment" is needed.

Measurement of Mistreatment

19. Overall this section is well organized. However, there is a need for highlighting the findings related to the studies conducted in Latin America and Caribbean.

20. Line 12/page 9: "The quantitative investigators in this review provide minimal explanations for why participants perceived experiences...": this sentence is not clear.

21. One of the limitation of cross-sectional studies is the study design i.e. cross-sectional design that does not allow for causal inference which means that causes of mistreatment cannot be determined.

22. Line 48/page 9: "Skilled Attendance for Everyone": How was mistreatment defined/assessed according to this charter?
23. Line 36/ page 10: I am not sure that the generalizability is of importance in qualitative studies, it would be better to focus on the transferability of the findings to other settings, and other measures to ensure the quality of the study.

24. Line 9/page 12: maybe you can explain what does the term "the objective measures of mistreatment" refer to, as well as the terms "perceived and actual frequency of mistreatment", "perceived and objective frequencies of mistreatment" and "perceived measures of mistreatment" that have been used in the text.

-Conclusion

25. This section could have been divided into three or four sections: discussion, methodological considerations, conclusion, and recommendations.

26. Lines 18-19/ page 12: the review of articles in three languages could be one of the strengths of this study.

27. Line 21/page 12: You mentioned that the review did not include grey literature, maybe you can explain why (inaccessible..).

28. Exploring health workers' perceptions is important, it would enable a fuller assessment of mistreatment of women during childbirth.

29. I am not sure about the use of references in the conclusion.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

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