OPEN PEER REVIEW

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Peer Review Report for "Changes in the Rate of Some Rare Neonatal Outcomes After the Implementation of the Health System Reform Plan in Iran: A 70-Month Case Study of an Educational Hospital Research"

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Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 12 May 2020
Revised Date: 29 Jun 2020
Accepted Date: 30 Jun 2020

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) — 17 May 2020

Dear AE,
The study is reviewed carefully. According to comments and revisions by the author, this manuscript is accepted.
Thanks

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) — 9 Jun 2020

Dear AE,
The authors aimed to compare the incidence of some rare birth complications before and after the implementation of health system evolution plan. I read the manuscript carefully. There are several issues in this regard:
Abstract:
1- It is stated at the objective section of the abstract that “The purpose of this study was to

investigate the effect of health system reform on some rare neonatal outcomes". However, according to data provided in the method section, this is a retrospective descriptive study and therefore it is impossible to examine the real effect of an independent factor on dependent factors in this kind of study. (There are many covariates). Are they really explored the effect of evolution plan on birth complications or merely reported the data for two period of times (before and after)?

2- What does this sentence mean? "52,817 vaginal delivery and cesarean section were performed from June 15, 2011, to April 15, 2017, for the incidence of complications". Were the deliveries performed with the aim of examining the complications???

Introduction:

3- The rationale of the study is not well explained. This means that by simply stating "any intervention has its own advantages and disadvantages" the aim of the study is not justifiable.

Method:

4- According to the data provided by the authors, this is a retrospective observational study but not an analytical survey. The statistical test performed in this study are just for description of differences and not analyzing the causes, effects and so on.

5- Many covariates could have impact on the birth outcomes. Are the results reported considering these factors? If not, Why? There is no information in this regard in the article.

6- The method section needs an essential amendment based on the first, fourth, and fifth comments.

Discussion:

7- In the second paragraph of the discussion section the authors stated that "the overall incidence rate of ischemic-hypoxic encephalopathy in the studied hospital (1.8 per 1,000 births) had no significant difference with those reported in other studies from the developed countries". Have they really examined the differences between the results of several studies?

8- In the seventh paragraph of the discussion section it is stated that "increase in the number of visits in the state hospitals due to the free franchise of vaginal delivery, which consequently increased the workload of hospital personnel and may also affect the incidence of studied complications". How did they come to this conclusion?

9- Study limitations are not stated at the end of the discussion section.

Thanks

Najmeh Maharlouei: Associate Editor | **Revision (0)** 13 Jun 2020

Dear EIC,

Thank you for your invitation. Regarding the manuscript entitled "Effect of Health System Reform Plan on the Some Rare Neonatal Outcomes: Case Study of an Educational Hospital, During 70 Months", I should mention that it has a well-written methodology and result sections. However the remaining parts need some corrections. Following details of the requested corrections have been mentioned.

Kindest regards

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision (0)** 13 Jun 2020

Dear Author,

The reviewers' comments are mentioned. Please correct the details as mentioned above carefully according to reviewers' request.

Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Dear Editor.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to submit a revised draft of our manuscript titled "Change of the Some Rare Neonatal Outcomes Rates after implementation of Health System Reform Plan in Iran: Case Study of an Educational Hospital, During 70 Months" to Shiraz E-medical Journal. We appreciate the time and effort that you and the reviewers have dedicated to providing valuable feedback on our manuscript. We are grateful to the reviewers for their insightful comments, which have improved the paper. We have incorporated changes that reflect most of the suggestions provided by the reviewers. All changes are highlighted in yellow in the revised manuscript. Please see below for our point-by-point responses to the reviewers comments.

Reviewer 2:

The authors aimed to compare the incidence of some rare birth complications before and after implementation of health system evolution plan. I read the manuscript carefully. There are several issues in this regard:

Abstract:
1- It is stated at the objective section of the abstract that "The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of health system reform on some rare neonatal outcomes". However, according to data provided in the method section, this is a retrospective descriptive study and therefore it is impossible to examine the real effect of an independent factor on dependent factors in this kind of study. (There are many covariates). Are they really explored the effect of evolution plan on birth complications or merely reported the data for two period of times (before and after)?

Thank you for pointing this out. We agree with this comment. Therefore, we have changed it

"The purpose of this study was to investigate the change of the some rare neonatal outcomes rates after implementation of health system reform plan in Iran"

2- What does this sentence mean? "52,817 vaginal delivery and cesarean section were performed from June 15, 2011 to April 15, 2017 for the incidence of complications". Were the deliveries performed with the aim of examining the complications???

Thank you for pointing this out. We agree with this comment. Therefore, we have changed it

"52,817 vaginal delivery and cesarean section were evaluated for the incidence of complications from June 15, 2011 to April 15, 2017"

Introduction:
3- The rationale of the study is not well explained. This means that by simply stating “any intervention has its own advantages and disadvantages” the aim of the study is not justifiable.

Thank you for pointing this out. We agree with this comment. Therefore, we have changed it

“Since that, few studies has been done on the changes in the rate of neonatal outcomes after the implementation of the HSRP in Iran”

Method:
4- According to the data provided by the authors, this is a retrospective observational study but not an analytical survey. The statistical test performed in this study are just for description of differences and not analyzing the causes, effects and so on.

Thank you for pointing this out. We agree with this comment. Therefore, we have changed it

The current retrospective observational study (before and after exposure) was conducted on all deliveries performed at Izadi Hospital in Qom, Iran during 70 months

5- Many covariates could have impact on the birth outcomes. Are the results reported considering this factors? If not, Why? There is no information in this regard in the article.

We agree with this comment. But, all of the complications studied in this study are related to the delivery process. Factors affecting these complications can include the ratio of the type of delivery, and the individuals and equipment associated with the delivery process. And, many of these variables can be derived from the implementing of health reform plan. For this reason, it is not correct to adjusting for these covariates. For this reason, covariate such as type of delivery only were compared in two period. Moreover, neonates with anomalies, or metabolic or syndromic disorders were excluded from the study.

Other issues, such as the volume of referrals and people and equipment related to the delivery process, were mentioned in the discussion section.

6- The method section needs essential amendment based on the first, fourth, and fifth comments.

Previous comments were answered and the requirements in the method section were corrected

Discussion:
7- In the second paragraph of the discussion section the authors stated that “the overall incidence rate of ischemic-hypoxic encephalopathy in the studied hospital (1.8 per 1,000 births) had no

significant difference with those reported in other studies from the developed countries". Are they really examined the differences between the results of several studies?

Thank you for pointing this out. We have changed it

"the overall incidence rate of ischemic-hypoxic encephalopathy in the studied hospital (1.8 per 1,000 births) was similar to those reported in other studies from the developed countries"

8- In the seventh paragraph of the discussion section it is stated that "increase in the number of visits in the state hospitals due to the free franchise of vaginal delivery, which consequently increased the workload of hospital personnel and may also affect the incidence of studied complications". How did they come to this conclusion?

The increase in the total number of deliveries, especially the number of vaginal deliveries, was corrected. And the results of Table 1 indicate an increase in hospital admissions and vaginal deliveries. And this issue has been raised as one of the possible causes.

"Another change occurred after the implementation of HSRP was an increase in the number of vaginal delivery due to the free franchise of vaginal delivery, which consequently increased the workload of hospital personnel and may also affect the incidence of studied complications"

9- Study limitations are not stated at the end of the discussion section.

It was mentioned at the end of the discussion section

According to the type of study, it was not possible to evaluate all variables affecting the desired outcomes in the present study. The present study was conducted in a single center, and the way of implementing the protocols in each center can affect the studied complications.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

Yaser Sarikhani: Reviewer | **Revision** (1) 29 Jun 2020

Dear AE,
The authors have made some changes to their manuscript to improve its quality. Therefore, it seems that by applying these changes, the consistency of the contents has improved.
Thanks

Najmeh Maharlouei: Associate Editor | **Revision** (1) 29 Jun 2020

Dear EIC,
According to the referees' opinion, the manuscript entitled "Change of the Some Rare Neonatal Outcomes Rates after implementation of Health System Reform Plan in Iran: Case Study of an Educational Hospital, During 70 Months" has been appropriately edited by the authors. Hence, it is acceptable for being published in SeMJ.
Kindest regards

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (1) 30 Jun 2020

Dear Author,
The document is reviewed carefully by the reviewers. According to their comments and your revisions as requested, this manuscript is accepted.
Thanks.