Reviewer's report

**Title:** Etiology of liver cirrhosis does not influence the severity of hepatic encephalopathy: a cross-sectional study

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 24 August 2008

**Reviewer:** Bader Faiyaz Zuberi

**Reviewer's report:**

**MAJOR COMPULSARY REVISIONS**

1. Title should be revised to be more representative of study (e.g., correlation of etiology with HE and QOL in cirrhosis)

2. Second paragraph in the section introduction regarding diabetes is unrelated to the topic.

3. Proper methods are not used to study the objectives, impact of etiology on prevalence could not be studied in a cross-sectional design neither the effects of etiology on QOL could be studied in a cross-sectional design. Both could be studied either in a cohort or a case-control design. However correlation could be studied in a cross-sectional design. Changes in either are advised accordingly.

4. Confounders were not defined, age, gender, severity of liver disease, diabetes and hypertension should rather be analyzed/adjusted as confounders.

5. Sample size estimation was not done; neither there is statement about the power of the study. It needs to be stated that the study had enough power to detect the differences.

6. For analysis patients were grouped into hepatocellular and cholestatic groups. Grouping many causes into two groups has reduced the degrees of freedom (df) of the study and has converted the study into comparison between these two groups rather than the etiology which was the objective of the study. In my opinion analysis should have been done for each individual etiology if not then title and methods should be modified accordingly.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests