Reviewer’s report

Title: Reshaping maternal services in Nigeria: any need for spiritual care?

Version: 3

Date: 22 February 2014

Reviewer: Imran Morhason-Bello

Reviewer’s report:

The BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth Review

General comment:
This paper has the potential of providing information to policy makers and other key players in Nigeria on role of spiritual support in antenatal care and childbirth as the author courageously delve into a sensitive topic in the country, and this is commendable. It will however be very essential that details of the research process be provided to the scientific community especially the study design and the context of the result to avoid misrepresentation.

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISION

Method section: The authors used two tertiary institutions as study sites that are offering tertiary healthcare service within the country. It is however not clear how they were selected (convenient versus random). One site represents a public health facility while the other is a private tertiary institution.

Secondly, how was the proportionate allocation of study population per site determined (scientific or convenient)?

Third, it is important to state the specific characteristics of each of the study sites (the bed space, number of antenatal clinic per week, annual average pregnancy and delivery rate, and is spiritual service or prayer session part of the ANC routine programme before?). This is important to appreciate the similarity and probably existing differences between the study sites apart from the public versus private difference. Specifically, BOWEN University is a private teaching institution established for the general public but owned by a Christian denomination (Baptist).

Fourth, How were the study participants recruited from the pool of antenatal clinic attendees (convenient or random sampling method)?

Results: It is important that the results are improved upon. The key issue is seeking preference of each attendee on spiritual service. The authors should not repeat their tables in prose rather summarise the key points. Second, some key findings bothering on the outcome are missing. For example, the authors’ state, “virtually all participants had varying spiritual practices that they desire the hospital will allow”. What are these spiritual practices??????

Limitation of study: The authors should include limitation(s) of their study findings
based on their response to some of these major issues raised if they were not considered during the conduct of the study.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISION

Introduction:
The author should quote the official average maternal mortality ratio for Nigeria

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests: NONE