Reviewer's report

Title: Factors associated with lack of Postnatal Care among Palestinian Women: A cross-sectional study in three Clinics in West Bank

Version: 1 Date: 18 April 2008

Reviewer: Susan Watt

Reviewer's report:

1. Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Abstract
   a. the sample was not “randomly selected”; it was a convenience sample
   b. “postnatal care very important” -- in Table 1 this is reported as “postnatal care necessary”; which is it?
   c. data does not jibe; here 67.4% yes; table says 62.7% yes; it is 62.8% if it is 166 of 264 respondents
   d. all the data in the Results section should be double checked since only percentages are provided and it is not clear if multiple answers were acceptable or if answers were ranked; alternatively response rates could be included in Figure 2 (see discretionary revisions below)

2. Page 4 or 5 “Methods” – sample size justification should be provided

3. Page 6 -- in the description of the dependent variable, the authors have classified “don’t know” as missing data. This is hard to understand since it would appear to be a legitimate answer to the question, indeed perhaps an important insight into the behavior of the subjects. Therefore, at least a rationale is required for handling the data in this way.

4. Page 6 on – the authors should refrain from using the term “normal delivery”. They might consider “unassisted vaginal delivery” as an alternative term.

5. page 23 (Figure 2 title page) N is given as 166; the N was 167 (from Table 1)

2. Minor Essential Revisions

a. Page 4, last paragraph – “with medical or social background” – grammar; what is a “social background”?

b. Page 8, last paragraph “had more than 1 child, was not employed” – "were note employed" – subject/verb agreement.

c. Page 13, line 11 – “hospital may due” missing word -- "may be due"

d. Figures 1 and 2 need labels and consistent formatting (e.g., capitalization) sample and subset Ns should be added.
3. Discretionary Revisions

a. Page 4, line 1 -- women’s attendance of postpartum care – word choice?

b. Page 4, last line -- explain the criteria for the selection of clinics; especially
criterion 3 “sufficiently staffed and equipped”………..for what? How was
sufficiency determined?

c. Page 5, 1st paragraph -- How is selection criteria related to “facilitate the
conduct of the study”? How does the location and number of patients “ensure a
wide range”? Volume is obvious; range is not.

d. Page 10, 2nd to last line of 2nd paragraph – “which is a traditional rule of”;
perhaps “custom” would be a better word choice.

e. Page 11 -- are there other sources of information/knowledge about pregnancy
and delivery, other than medical sources, that are used by women in this area
and does this account for some of the behaviour?

f. Page 11, lat line “were risk factors” - consider identifying them as “predictors of”

g. On Page 8 the authors report a 99% participation rate. This is extraordinary
and suggests very high level compliance with authority figures. Does this result
suggest anything in terms of the major focus of their paper?

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

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

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a
statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests