Reviewer's report

Title: Health-related quality of life of Palestinian preschoolers in the Gaza Strip: a cross-sectional study

Version: 2 Date: 13 December 2010

Reviewer: James W. Varni

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The objective of the study was to investigate the health-related quality of life (HRQOL) of preschoolers in the Gaza Strip. This is an important study which documents the severe impact of political violence and deprivation on the HRQOL of these preschoolers. As such, it makes a significant contribution to the literature, and highlights the urgent needs of this vulnerable population of young children. There are several revisions which will further improve the empirical contribution of the study.

1. The Introduction should provide a more detailed review of the extant research literature on the effects of war on child adjustment. Currently, there is only one reference to PTSD.

2. A set of hypotheses should be generated at the end of the Introduction, and supported by the available research literature. These hypotheses should then guide the data analysis, particularly given the large number of statistical contracts across subgroups.

3. Tables 4, 5, and 6 should indicate the significant differences between the PedsQL™ scores across the contrast subgroups using superscripts (e.g., a, b, c). The footer on Table 4 should include Cohen’s values for small, medium, and large effect sizes. Thus, the tables should be self-explanatory, without having to refer to the Result section to understand the differences between subgroups.

4. The references in the Discussion section should be double checked. For example, in the first paragraph, the reference to “children with cerebral palsy” is reference #10. However, reference #10 refers to PedsQL™ ADHD findings. Several other references are incorrectly cited.

5. The reference list should be corrected for partial references. A more careful proof-reading is indicated, including checking whether the correct references are cited in the text throughout the manuscript.

6. In sum, this is an important study that requires some revisions to enhance the study’s contribution to the empirical literature.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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