Reviewer's report

Title: The value of maternal anthropometric characteristics in predicting low birth weight and preterm birth in Sudanese newborn infants

Version: 1 Date: 18 December 2007

Reviewer: Patricia Rondo

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions

Methods:
The methods are appropriate and described in details. However, the exclusion criterion, for selection of the pregnant women, is not very clear. Why did the authors exclude women with gestational diabetes and did not exclude those with hypertension, for example? How about other diseases?

Why did the authors choose a baby scale with a precision of 50g? For newborns this is very high. Usually baby scales have a precision of 5 or 10g.

Results:
The results are interesting, but the authors could analyze their data using logistic regression, considering the enormous number of confounding variables.

Minor essential revisions

Objective:
The question posed by the authors is not new. May be the study is new for Sudan.

Abstract:
The section result of the abstract is not very clear. The reader is confused about the tests carried out in the study, although some of them have been specified in the section methods.

Results:
The authors should specify in the tables the statistical tests carried out for the analysis (example: in tables 4 and 5). It is difficult for the reader to understand which tests have been carried out to get those results.

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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 I have no competing interests.

Prof. Patricia HC Rondão