Reviewer's report

**Title:** Comparison of health-related quality of life between housewives and employed women in Zahedan City, Southeast Iran during 2009-2010: A cross-sectional study

**Version:** 6  **Date:** 8 May 2012

**Reviewer:** Pawel Zagozdzon

**Reviewer's report:**

The authors report data on Quality of Life in housewives and employed women in southeast Iran. This is in principle an interesting investigation since it deals with the important issues related to social determinants of women health in the context of culture dominated by Muslim religion.

**Major Compulsory Revisions:**

The major methodological concern is related to lack of controlling for several important confounders in the analysis. There are significant differences in major characteristics between housewives and employed women (Table 1). Employed women were older and better educated. These differences were not addressed in the analysis of health-related Quality of life in this paper. It is well known that education positively affect quality of life. The authors fail to adequately characterized groups under the study. It would be interesting to see the differences regarding the income and number of children between the two groups as aforementioned characteristics may also influence quality of life in women. In order to correctly address the question posed in the paper some kind of approach to the multivariate analysis should be proposed to assess the role of employment independently of other variables.

**Minor Essential Revisions:**

There are also a few minor issues that would need attention before it could be published and I have listed some comments below:

1. Page 2 line 6 and Page 4 line 7: authors use term “case-control study” for design and methods used in their work. From technical point of view this is not case-control study as there are no cases of any disease at the start of investigation but simple two groups comparison coming from survey and groups were distinguished according to employment status. Obviously, the data from survey can be analysed like in case-control study if definition of “cases” is applied. The cases would be those with worse health-related QoL.
2. Page 3 line 16: data on Iranian women labor force participation need to have adequate reference.
3. Page 5 line 1 to 7: it seems that the standard version of SF-36 was used in the standard way. Therefore it is not necessary to described it in details.
4. Page 5 line 9: non-parametric version of ANOVA should be considered as the QoL data usually does not have normal distribution.

5. Page 7 line 5: Authors refer to study limitation. They should emphasize cross-sectional character of this study and the lack of information about important confounders e.g. the income level of the participants.

This is a informative article and will be an important contribution to the literature in documenting the impact of social participation and employment on women quality of life.

**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:**

I declare that I have no competing interests