Reviewer's report

Title: Analyzing the Impact of Social Factors on Homelessness: A Fuzzy Cognitive Map Approach

Version: 1 Date: 8 October 2012

Reviewer: Sandhya Samarasinghe

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript is well written and easy to read. It builds FCM based on data collected from literature on homelessness. It has a good selection of literature and methods are clearly explained. Analysis of 3 scenarios are presented and reliable observations have been made from the results. As it is based on limited data collected from various published articles, the work qualifies as a preliminary study that shows that FCM is a useful tool to analyse the complex situation of homelessness. As it is, it not at a stage where policies can be formulated to address homelessness but It can be used as a base for a more comprehensive and planned future study on homelessness based on data gathered specifically for this purpose and this could help improve policies. Overall, the study is a good first attempt to see if FCM is useful to get insights into homelessness and how realistic the outcomes are.

(I) Minor Essential Revisions:
1. Abstract - last sentence - should read 'direction and strength of relationship between concepts'
2. 3rd line below Eq. 2 : should read 'transformation'
3. page 10, sentence before IF <EDUCATION> needs revision
4. page 13 line 2- '4x13' =52 need correction
5. page 13 last sentence - can improve
6. page 15, line 2- brain insult? Do you mean brain injury?
7. Conclusion- line 4- should 'direction and strength of relationship between concepts'
8. Referene number 22- First author is missing. Please add: Obiedat, M.

(II) Discretionary Revisions
1) Homelessness is used as a receiver variable. In reality, it can in turn affect many other variables.
2) Also, there can be many more feed back links between various other concepts. Therefore, the map in reality should be more dynamic than what is presented.

It could be the lack of data from literature that led to this partially dynamic map. In
order to have all possible links and feedbacks incorporated realistically into FCMs, preferrably, a field study should be conducted, or more literature needs to be scanned in search of the needed data.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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'