Reviewer’s report

Title: Evaluation of health workforce competence in maternal and neonatal issues in public health sector of Pakistan: An assessment of their training needs.

Version: 6 Date: 10 September 2010

Reviewer: sahar Hassan

Reviewer’s report:

Reviewer’s report 2

Manuscript Title: Evaluation of health workforce competence in maternal and neonatal issues in public health sector of Pakistan: An assessment of their training needs

MS ID : 1055537020359567

Date: 8th of September 2010

Reviewer comments

I would like to thank authors very much for considering all the major revision points that were included in the first review. Their research is much understood with all the elaborations and explanations they integrated into various areas of the content. However, one major point that I find missing in the manuscript, that is, ethical consideration. Authors need to document this point clearly in the final version.

Below, are mostly some minor revisions that authors may improve.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

1) Methods: Ethical consideration: No ethical consideration for this research were included in the manuscript. Were the providers consented for their participation???

Minor Essential Revisions:

1) Tables: Needs correction: There are two different tables that were named as ‘Table 1’.

2) Results: Sub-title: Outcomes in resuscitation skills assessment: Paragraph # 5: Needs correction: mentioned (Table 3) shows the substantial differences……..skills. However, Table 3 title is different.

3) Methods: Sub-title: Data collection & sampling: paragraph # 1: : Re-organization:

this paragraph is a limitation. Authors may want to change its place to be under limitations, page 10.

4) Methods: Sub-title: Evaluation of methodology for knowledge and skills: Page
# 9: paragraph #1: line # 3: Needs referencing: Authors mentioned ‘standardized checklist’. Authors need to provide proper referencing for this.

5) References: Review i.e. references # 21, 22, 17.

6) Editing: the manuscript needs a good editing for language which might cut greatly on the length and make more concise.

Discretionary Revisions:

1) Tables: Avoid repetition: I advise to omit ‘Table 2’ as the same findings were represented in ‘Figure 4’ which is more clear.

2) Tables: Table 3: Percentage distribution of scores obtained by different cadres on counseling skills: is a bit confusing as it is crowded with too many numbers that can be easily displayed in a graph or a summary of statistics (mean, SD) for each group. This will make it easier for the reader to grasp your main findings.

3) Discussion: paragraph # 12: authors elaborated on the counseling and communication skills of providers (LHW) as being reluctance to communicate sensitive issues like family planning and reproductive health. It is evidenced from many countries that women feel more comfortable to talk and receive reproductive health care from female providers. The reader might find it strange why those health providers who are women feel reluctance while talking to women?

Is it related to their training skills? Cultural values i.e. fear of being judged in a wrong way? Workload?

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

none