Reviewer’s report

Title: The assessment of developmental status using the Ages and Stages questionnaire-3 in nutritional research in North Indian.

Version: 1 Date: 26 February 2013

Reviewer: Fahmida Tofail

Reviewer’s report:

It is important to have a culture-free, easy to administer, comprehensive developmental assessment tool, particularly for young children with age range zero to five years. Ages and Stages questionnaire (ASQ) is a screening tool that addresses several domains of development of young children through mother’s report. In this study the authors made a good attempt by assessing the feasibility of the translated version of ASQ in a North Indian research setting through mixed approach (direct assessment/observation and mother’s report) in a clinic setting as the mothers were illiterate and inexperienced to fill out the questionnaire. Despite presenting moderately good internal consistency of the adapted instrument, lack of some reliability and validity measures limit interpretation. The manuscript in its current form needs additional work. The authors are encouraged to address the following concerns:

1. Major Compulsory Revisions : None
2. Minor essential revisions:
   a. Please show how ASQ scores correlate with children’s nutritional (Breast feeding and Z scores) and socio-demographic variables (income/ parental education/occupation). This information will explain some validity of the measures.
   b. Is the change of item “Does your child eat with a fork?” to“Does your child take chapatti with Dal (lenses)?” picking up the underlying construct? The original question is focusing on the ability of the child to eat with a fork and the changed one is focusing on what he eats.
   c. Test –retest reliability score is very important information, particularly for this paper, please provide the information if available or discuss this point as a weakness.
   d. Please mention about limitations of the study in the “Discussion Section”
   e. In figure 1, different percentage of observation in same subscale introduced tester’s bias. Please explain what exactly this figure is representing. It is not clear how one subscale can have different percentage of observation.
3. Dictionary revisions:
   a. Page 5, Line 4 “golden standard “ will be “gold standard”
   b. Please put a “0” before decimal points
Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests: 
I have no competing interest