Author’s response to reviews

Title: Individual and healthcare system factors influencing antenatal care attendance in Saudi Arabia

Authors:

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Author’s response to reviews:

Thank you for your constructive comments. We have made all changes and additions.

Judith Anaman-Torgbor, PhD (Reviewer 1): My Comments to the Author

Title
1. Based on the research aim which was clearly stated in the abstract, the author may consider revising the title to read "Individual and healthcare system factors influencing antenatal care in Saudi Arabia"

Revised

Background
2. Para1, Lines 32-33: The author needs to include "about" in the sentence to read: Globally, about 500,000 women…

Revised

3. Para 1, Line 36: The sentence should be revised to read "However, many women globally are not offered…." 

Revised

Method
4. What is the research design?

Added

5. What sampling technique was employed by this study?

Added

6. What levels of health facilities were included in this study?

We have added further information
7. What are the features of the facilities that were identified for this study?

We have added further information – being careful to try not to identify the hospitals included.

8. What types of health services are provided at these facilities?

We have added further information.

9. What informed the sampling of 242 participants for this study to avoid type I & II errors?

The study was exploratory. Very little research has been conducted on this topic before in Saudi Arabia, or indeed in the Middle East. Much of the research that has been conducted is qualitative. One similar study in the region aimed to recruit 250 women, and achieved a sample size of 200.

In terms of a sample size calculation, based on the population of pregnant women who would be expected to attend clinic during the data collection period at those hospitals (n = 600), a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5% a sample size of at least 235 participants was needed. This was considered to be sufficient power for an exploratory study. We have added this to the paper.

Results

10. Para3, Line 202-205: The author needs to reword this write-up in order to engage the reader.

We have reworded.

11. Para4, line 209: The author indicated "education group…" this can be revised to "educational background or level of education"?

We have amended these.

12. The author may consider presenting the results of the chi-Square test analysis in a separate table to engage the reader?

We have added these.

13. The author may also consider revising the study tables especially table 2. The measurements under "Reasons" should not be stated in question form as administered to the participants; instead they should just be variables. For instance "I believe that it is not important to attend ANC" could be re-stated as "ANC not important"

We have amended this.

14. Lines 223-228: The author indicated here "series of tests were performed" However, these test were not presented to enhance the understanding of the findings?

We have added these.
15. Line 236: The author mentioned that T-tests were used to explore differences. Where are the results for the T-tests and which variables were explored here?

We have added these

16. Further statistical analyses including inferential statistical analysis are required to explore associations among the study variables and possibly predict mothers' behaviors.

We have added further details including all non significant tests and regression analyses

Discussion

17. Para1, lines 270-272: The author may consider putting the information here in perspective for the reader by indicating for instance that "this study explored association between potential factors that have been previously identified by mothers in a qualitative study …………"

18. Para2, lines 279-280: It is not clear what the author want to communicate here?

19. Para3, line 285-295: Could this be that the findings here were as a result of the sample size? (Type II error)

20. Para4, line 299-300: Why would this be the case?

21. It appeared that the discussion chapter is a comparison of the current study with previous ones lacking critical thinking discussion. The findings were not presented in the context of previous studies so as to identify potential future study areas.

We have added further information and discussion for your points throughout the discussion.

Conclusion

22. The study indeed identifies some important factors influencing maternal attendance such as staff communication, the author failed to show how this findings will contribute to the worth of knowledge in the topic area and did not also suggest possible area for further studies to improve the understanding.

We have added discussion regarding impact and further research

Hung-Hui Chen, Ph.D (Reviewer 2): BMC Health Services Research
Manuscript Number: BHSR-D-19-01891
Manuscript Title: Clinical facilities and staff communication skills influence care attendance in Saudi Arabia

The reviewer's comments:
The authors intended to investigate the factors associated with missing antenatal care in Saudi Arabia at individual and healthcare systems levels. Although the study objectives and findings are interesting, there are still many missing details to be filled in this manuscript. Overall, I recommend that this
manuscript requires major revision before resubmission.

1. The number of mother recruited for this study should be indicated in the method section of the abstract.

   Added

2. The authors should provide more details regarding the standard suggestion or subsidy for frequency and timing before delivery in Saudi Arabic of the "ANC attendance."

   Added

3. Table 1: The authors should present this table in 3 columns (those with missing vs those without missing appointment, and an overall column). You should also incorporate the sample number (N=242) in the table title; indicate the numbers of missing data beneath the table as in educational level (n=241), marital status (n=100?), and household income (n=238) variables; or shown as "No data" as the authors have done for "age group"; and present additional information of the chi-squared results (including n (%) information) between socio-demographics and attendance.

   We have split the table as required, included 'no data' and ensured all numbers and percentages are correct.

4. Remove Tables 3 and 4 from the manuscript. Tables 3 and 4 are important results of this study. They should be included and discussed in the result sections, and the inclusion of tables 3 and 4 are redundant information.

   We have removed table three and added the information into the text instead. We have expanded table 4 to include the inferential statistics for each outcome.

5. Indicate the results of t-test between "barriers for attendance, staff attitude and communication, health literacy, and health beliefs" and attendance (miss or not, delay or not, planned attendance) in the tables.

   We have added in this information to table 4.

6. The authors should also perform multiple logistic regression to investigate the factors associated with missing antenatal care.

   We have added these for missing appointments and delaying appointments as multiple factors are associated with these outcomes.