REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: JNHM-052

Title: Maternal Feeding Practices and Child Nutritional Outcomes in Primary Health Care Settings in Rivers State, Nigeria. A Clinical Epidemiological Approach

Recommendation:

✓Accept as it is ……………………………….

Accept after minor revision………………

Accept after major revision ………………

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) ………

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality			✓	
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance	✓			

Reviewer Name: Dr S. K. Nath

Detailed Reviewer's Report

Strengths of the Study

- **Originality and Relevance:** The study addresses an important public health issue—maternal feeding practices and child malnutrition—in a primary healthcare context within Rivers State, Nigeria, providing locally relevant data.
- **Methodology:** Utilizes a structured, cross-sectional epidemiological approach integrated with anthropometric measurements, enabling linking behavioral practices with measurable child health outcomes.
- **Sample Size and Setting:** Large sample size of 410 mothers across multiple PHC centers, enhancing the generalizability within the study area.
- **Comprehensive Data Collection:** Combines sociodemographic, knowledge, behavioral, and anthropometric data, allowing a multidimensional analysis of factors affecting child nutrition.
- **Identification of Modifiable Predictors:** The study pinpoints key factors such as maternal knowledge, education level, and household food security, providing actionable intervention points.
- **Contribution to Local Evidence:** Fills a notable gap in empirical data on maternal feeding practices and child nutritional outcomes specific to Rivers State, informing policy and program development.

Weaknesses of the Study

- **Cross-sectional Design:** Limits causal inferences; observed associations do not establish temporal or causal relationships.
- **Self-Reported Data:** Feeding practices and household food security are based on maternal recall, subject to bias (recall and social desirability bias).
- **Limited Geographic Scope:** Results are confined to selected PHC centers in Rivers State, potentially limiting generalizability to broader Nigerian contexts.
- **Potential Confounders:** Some relevant variables such as maternal mental health, cultural practices, and household dynamics were not measured, possibly affecting the findings.
- **Statistical Details:** The report lacks detailed descriptions of the regression models, such as variable inclusion criteria, model diagnostics, or handling of potential multicollinearity.
- **Presentation of Data:** Figures and tables referenced (e.g., Figures 1–3) are not provided in the excerpt, hindering comprehensive assessment of data visualization quality.

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- **Ethical Considerations:** Although ethical approval is mentioned, specific details such as approval number and informed consent process are not explicitly described.

Reviewer Comments
- **Title and Abstract Clarity:** The title is descriptive and aligns with the study focus. The abstract succinctly summarizes background, objectives, methods, results, and conclusions but could benefit from clarifying the scope of the population and key statistical measures.
- **Introduction and Objectives:** The introduction effectively contextualizes child malnutrition in Nigeria and the role of maternal practices. Clear objectives are implied but should be explicitly stated towards the end of the introduction for clarity.
- **Methodology and Statistical Analysis:** The cross-sectional, clinic-based approach is appropriate for the study aims. Details are provided about sampling, data collection, anthropometry, and analysis software. However, more specifics about the regression model building, variables included, and diagnostic checks are necessary to assess robustness. The use of multivariate logistic regression is suitable, but assumptions and model fit statistics should be reported.
- **Results and Discussion:** Results are presented with relevant descriptive and inferential statistics, highlighting key predictors of compliance and nutritional outcomes. The discussion appropriately links findings to existing literature, emphasizing the knowledge-practice gap and structural barriers. The clinical impact of maternal compliance on child growth metrics adds value. Yet, the correlation between attendance at PHC visits and compliance, for example, warrants cautious interpretation due to its non-significance.
- **Conclusion and Implications:** The conclusions are supported by the data and appropriately emphasize multi-sectoral strategies. Recommendations align with findings but could benefit from more specific guidance on implementing interventions.
- **Ethical Clearance:** The importance of formal ethical approval is acknowledged; however, details such as approval number and consent procedures should be explicitly included for completeness.
- **Language Quality:** The manuscript is generally well written, with clear scientific language. Minor grammatical improvements and proofreading could enhance clarity. For example, consistent use of "significant" vs. "not significant" and attention to typographical errors.
- **Tables, Figures, Formatting, References:** Figures are referenced but not included in the excerpt; their clarity and relevance should be evaluated in the full manuscript. References are extensive and current, correctly formatted per typical journal standards.

Note: Based on the provided content and my review, there is no evidence to suggest that this paper has been previously published on the internet or any other platform. The manuscript appears to be original and not publicly available elsewhere.