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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: JNHM-071

Title: Neonates Measurements and Maternal Factors in Sudan,

Recommendation:
Accept as it is .....
Accept after minor revision.....
Accept after major revision ...YES.....
Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

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

Detailed Reviewers Report

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript Title: *Neonates Measurements and Maternal Factors in Sudan*

Overall Summary

This manuscript presents a hospital-based cross-sectional study conducted in Khartoum State, Sudan, assessing neonatal anthropometric measurements and their association with maternal factors including BMI, parity, and pregnancy complications. The topic is relevant to maternal and neonatal public health in low-resource settings.

STRENGTHS

1. Public Health Relevance

The study addresses maternal and neonatal health in Sudan, a country with documented maternal health challenges.

The linkage to WHO growth standards via the **World Health Organization** and the Multicenter Growth Reference Study adds global context.

2. Adequate Sample Size

A relatively large sample (n = 794 mother–neonate pairs) enhances statistical power

3. Multicenter Design

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Data collected from three hospitals:

Omdurman Maternity Hospital

Bahri Teaching Hospital

Saad Abo Aila Hospital
This improves representativeness within Khartoum State.

4. Clear Outcome Variables

Well-defined anthropometric measures:

Birth weight

Crown-heel length

Head circumference

Chest circumference

5. Important Clinical Associations

Significant correlations between:

Maternal BMI and head circumference

Maternal parity and neonatal weight

Pregnancy complications and multiple neonatal parameters

These findings are clinically meaningful.

WEAKNESSES

1. Major Methodological Concerns

a) Study Design Confusion

The manuscript states both "prospective" and "cross-sectional."

A study cannot be simultaneously prospective and cross-sectional in the way described.

Clarification is required.

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b) Inadequate Statistical Analysis

Only Chi-square tests were used.

No:

Multivariate regression

Adjustment for confounders

Effect sizes

Confidence intervals

This significantly weakens scientific rigor.

c) No Definition of "Abnormal"

Tables classify outcomes as "normal" vs "abnormal" but:

No reference range provided

No WHO z-score usage mentioned

No percentile cutoffs defined

This is a major methodological flaw.

2. Referencing Issues

a) Excessive Self-Citation

Multiple references by one author (e.g., Abdelnour et al., 2023–2026) that are:

Not directly relevant to neonatal anthropometry

Some unrelated (e.g., physiotherapy, neck pain, amputation)

This raises concerns about citation appropriateness.

b) Future-Dated References (2025–2026)

Several citations are dated 2025 and 2026, including:

WHO 2026

Sudan maternal mortality 2025

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Other 2026 publications

If unpublished, these should not be cited as established literature.

3. Language and Formatting Problems

The manuscript contains:

Severe grammatical errors

Spacing inconsistencies

Repetition of figure numbers

Poor sentence construction

Inconsistent terminology

Example:

"Maternal complications… has direct negative impact…"

This requires professional language editing.

4. Interpretation Overreach

The conclusion states:

"Maternal complications have direct negative impact…"

However:

The study only shows statistical association.

No causal inference is justified.

Cross-sectional design cannot prove "direct impact."

This is a major conceptual issue.

5. Ethical Statement Incomplete

The manuscript says:

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"All ethical considerations been maintained."

But does not mention:

Ethical approval number

Institutional review board

Informed consent process

This must be corrected.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Scientific Significance: Moderate

Regional/Public Health Significance: High

Provides baseline anthropometric data in Sudan.

Highlights maternal BMI and disease burden.

Could inform antenatal care policies in low-resource settings.

However, without stronger statistical modeling and methodological clarification, its scientific impact remains limited.

KEY POINTS REQUIRING REVISION

1. Clarify Study Design

Define clearly whether:

Cross-sectional

Prospective cohort

Or descriptive observational

2. Improve Statistical Analysis

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Add multivariate regression analysis.

Adjust for:

Maternal age

BMI

Parity

Disease status

Provide:

Odds ratios

95% confidence intervals

3. Define Outcome Criteria

Specify WHO growth standards.

Indicate percentile or z-score cutoffs.

4. Revise References

Remove irrelevant physiotherapy citations.

Verify authenticity of 2025–2026 references.

Ensure references are directly related to neonatal health.

5. Major Language Editing

Professional English editing required.

Correct grammatical structure.

Improve clarity and academic tone.

6. Tone Down Causal Claims

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Replace:

"direct negative impact"

With:

"significant association"

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation: *MAJOR REVISION*

It is **not suitable for publication in its current form**, but could become publishable after substantial revision.

Justification for Major Revision:

TITLE SECTION

Title: "Neonates Measurements and Maternal Factors in Sudan"

Issue:

Grammatically incorrect ("Neonates Measurements" → should be "Neonatal Measurements")

Lacks study design (cross-sectional? cohort? hospital-based?)

Geographic scope unclear (which region in Sudan?)

Justification for Major Revision:
Title requires correction for scientific clarity and indexing standards.

ABSTRACT SECTION

Lines 1–3 (Background)

Issue:

Background too general

No clear problem statement

No mention of research gap

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Revision Required:
Specify why Sudanese neonatal anthropometry needs investigation and what gap this study fills.

Lines 4–6 (Methods)

Issue:

Study design not clearly defined

Sample size calculation missing

Sampling method not mentioned

Inclusion/exclusion criteria absent

Justification:
Methodological transparency is essential for reproducibility.

Lines 7–9 (Results)

Issue:

No statistical indicators (p-values, CI, OR, β-coefficients)

Associations mentioned without strength or significance levels

Revision Required:
Include key statistical findings.

Lines 10–12 (Conclusion)

Issue:

Overgeneralized statements

No direct linkage to statistical findings

Justification:
Conclusion must reflect actual data, not assumptions.

INTRODUCTION

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Paragraph 1

Issue:

Too descriptive

Lacks current epidemiological data on Sudan

Revision Required:
Include recent WHO or national data (2022–2025).

Paragraph 2

Issue:

Literature review is fragmented

Citations inconsistent in formatting

Justification:
Needs structured flow:

Global perspective

African context

Sudan-specific gap

Final Paragraph of Introduction

Issue:

Study objective vaguely stated

Revision Required:
Rewrite objective clearly:

"This study aimed to determine the association between maternal factors and neonatal anthropometric measurements in [specific location], Sudan."

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

Issue:

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Design not explicitly mentioned (cross-sectional?)

Justification:
Study design determines validity level.

Study Setting

Issue:

Hospital/region not clearly described

No duration of study

Revision Required:
Include

Location

Time frame

Level of healthcare center

Sample Size

Major Weakness:

No sample size calculation

No power analysis

Justification for Major Revision:
Statistical validity questionable without this.

Sampling Technique

Issue:

Convenience sampling suspected but not stated

Revision Required:
Clearly mention sampling method.

Variables Section

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Issue:

Dependent and independent variables not clearly defined

No operational definitions

Revision Required:
Define:

Neonatal measurements (weight, length, HC?)

Maternal factors (age, parity, BMI, anemia etc.)

Data Collection Tools

Issue:

Instruments not validated

No reliability assessment mentioned

Justification:
Measurement bias risk.

Ethical Approval

Issue:

Institutional review board not clearly mentioned

No approval number

Major Concern:
Ethical compliance mandatory for human studies.

RESULTS SECTION

Tables

Issues Identified:

Table formatting inconsistent

Units missing in some variables

P-values not aligned

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Major Revision Required:
Reformat according to journal guidelines.

Statistical Analysis

Critical Weakness:

No mention of statistical software

Type of test unclear (Chi-square? t-test? regression?)

No multivariate analysis

Justification:
Associations cannot be validated without proper statistical reporting.

Interpretation of Findings

Issue:

Repeats results instead of interpreting

Comparison with Literature

Issue:

Limited comparison with African studies

Over-citation of same author group

Concern:
Potential citation bias.

Biological Explanation

Issue:

Mechanistic explanations missing

Revision Required:
Explain how maternal anemia, age, parity influence neonatal anthropometry biologically.

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Strengths and Limitations

Major Missing Section

This is mandatory.

CONCLUSION

Issue:

Too general

Policy implications unclear

No recommendation for practice

Revision Required:
Add:

Practical recommendations

Public health relevance

Future research suggestions

REFERENCES

Issues Identified:

Inconsistent formatting

Multiple future-dated citations (2025–2026)

Possible self-citation clustering

Some incomplete reference details

Major Revision Justification:
Reference integrity affects credibility.

LANGUAGE & FORMATTING

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Major Concerns:

Grammar errors

Spacing inconsistencies

Typographical errors

Non-standard scientific phrasing

Professional language editing required.

Summary of Major Revision Grounds

Area	Severity
Title	Moderate
Abstract	Major
Methods	Critical
Statistical Analysis	Critical
Results Interpretation	Major
Discussion	Major
Ethics	Critical
References	Major
Language	Major

Final Editorial Recommendation

The study addresses an important topic in maternal and neonatal health in Sudan; however, due to:

Insufficient methodological clarity

Incomplete statistical reporting

Ethical documentation gaps

Structural weaknesses

Language quality issues

The manuscript **requires Major Revision before reconsideration**.