Author's response to reviews

Title: Molecular Epidemiology of Hepatitis B Virus Genotypes in Pakistan

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Cover Letter

We are highly grateful to Dr. Helene Norder and Dr. Kendal Yalcin for recommending the manuscript for publication.

We have checked and read the manuscript up to our best effort.
The queries raised by Dr. Hakan Leblebicioglu are welcomed and have been replied as below.

1. **The definition for case selection was not given.**
   Subjects for the present study were selected randomly from the major and prestigious hospitals of each of the four provinces of the country. These hospitals also represent as a reference centre for the disease investigation. Because the current project is based on the reporting of HBV genotypes for the first time, therefore, no certain criteria like risk groups, age, gender was considered although it has been analyzed and presented in Table 1. Also, samples positive for HCV and HDV were excluded from the study criteria.

2. **Are the chronic hepatitis or inactive carriers.**
The subjects comprised of chronic patients also but mostly were acute and symptomatic.

3. **Is the study population represents the population of the country.**
   As this research study has been analyzed for HBV patients from all of the provinces of Pakistan, it gives a picture of the genotype distribution in the various regions of Pakistan.

4. **The demographic features of the cases should be given.**
   Demographics have been added in the Results, Tables and Discussion section.

5. **Are all the cases from Pakistan?**
   Yes, all the cases are native of Pakistan with no history of abroad traveling.

6. **Which population was screened for hepatitis B.**
   As already discussed, the patients presented at various hospitals with their clinical data and available sufficient serum samples under proper storage were included for further testing and analysis. The number of Subjects was although small because of the limitations of Research Resources and funding constraints.