Reviewer’s report

Title: Prevalence of infectious keratitis in Central China

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Reviewer: Maryam Ferdousi

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Comments:

Abstract:
• Methods section did not have enough detailed information about the recruitment of patients and the examinations.
• Is the conclusion really reflecting the actual conclusion of the study?

Introduction:
• There are referencing errors such as:
  o “Infectious keratitis is still one of the main causes of ocular damage and visual disability” - none of the references sited for this phrase is an actual prevalence study.
  o Based on the WHO, other main causes of visual impairment in 2002 are glaucoma (12.3%), age-related macular degeneration (AMD) (8.7%) and then corneal opacities (5.1%)
• There are phrases which need references such as:
  o Through the perseverance of public health programs, the morbidity of corneal diseases due to Chlamydia trachomatis, Onchocerciasis, and leprosy have been controlled relatively stable
  o China is estimated to have the largest number of blind people globally
  o Is the China’s First National Sample Survey of Disabled Persons really suggested infectious keratitis as a major cause of corneal blindness?
• Although some demographic characteristics of the patients are evaluated in this study, the risk factors of infectious keratitis were not evaluated in this study like it says in the objective

Methodology:
• What do you mean by corneal doctors?
  o The sample represents a good cross section from both urban and rural areas. As a preliminary study had been conducted was there a sample size calculation prior to this study? As the prevalence of the disease is less than 10%, what was the level of precision?
  o Were laboratory tests used for the diagnosis of viral keratitis or was the diagnosis only based on the signs and symptoms of the disease? Laboratory
tests are necessary in complicated cases when the clinical diagnosis is uncertain and in all cases of suspected neonatal herpes infection.

Results:

- What was the prevalence of corneal blindness in both urban and rural area?
- What were the demographic characteristics of the participants such as gender?

Conclusion:

- How educational distribution has been evaluated in this study and what is the definition of lower education levels?
- There should be no new material introduced in the conclusion. The association between the prevalence of the disease, gender and educational level needs to be introduced in the results section initially.