Author's response to reviews

Title: Depression in the Elderly in Karachi, Pakistan: A Cross Sectional Study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Sir/Madam,

With reference to the email received from Journal Editorial Office dated April 9, 2013 I am resubmitting my revised manuscript titled “Depression in the Elderly in Karachi, Pakistan: A Cross Sectional Study”. Following are the responses to reviewer’s comments that are incorporated in the revised manuscript:

Comments of Reviewer:

1. In the Introduction section, page 4, 2nd paragraph, please specify what the authors mean by “health workforce per 10,000 population is quite low”. That is, please specify the exact figure for Pakistan and the figure of the regional average.

   The exact figure for Pakistan and regional average has been specified in the introduction section, pg 4, 2nd paragraph as mentioned below:
   “WHO estimates that the health workforce in Pakistan of 8.1 physicians and 5.9 nurses/midwives per 10,000 population is quite low compared to the regional average of 10.9 and 15.6 per 10,000 population respectively [12].”

2. In Methods, page 7, 3rd paragraph, I suggest to limit the explanation of sampling process to objective facts and to avoid phrases such as “experienced demographer” and “based on his research”.

   In Methods, pg 7, 3rd paragraph, phrases such as “experienced demographer” and “based on his research” have been removed.

3. In Methods, page 7, 3rd paragraph, the point of how they sampled the number of 46 blocks is not clear enough.

   In Methods, page 7, 3rd paragraph, the method of sampling 46 blocks is further clarified as mentioned below:
   “We sampled 46 blocks for our study from the complete list of the blocks through simple random sampling. Each block in the list was assigned a number. By generating random numbers in computer we drew 46 blocks on random basis”.

4. In the Study Variables section, page 9, please clarify what do you mean by Activities of Daily Living? Also clarify the distinction among daily activities and instrumental activities.

   This has been addressed in the Study Variable section as:
   “Functional status (ability to perform activities of daily living) was assessed using the 15-item Activities of Daily Living (ADL) scale [38, 39]. The ADL scale has 10 questions related to non-instrumental and 5 questions related to instrumental activities of daily living (IADL). The ADL has been used in several studies to assess disability among elderly population [38, 39]. The ADL involves questions related to self-care and daily routine including dressing, bathing, eating, toileting etc. The IADL includes things that people do to maintain their own independent lifestyle e.g: shopping, housekeeping, using telephone etc. IADL are considered to be more difficult than ADLs because they require both physical and cognitive abilities [38, 39].”
In addition, we have also clarified in other sections of the revised manuscript that physical activity applies to the second variable which is “Amount of time spent in physical activities” and the 15-item ADL scale scoring reflects the functional status of elderly.

5. References number 38 and 39 correspond to studies of association. It would be better to cite studies of the scales used in the study (Katz, Lawton and Brody or any other authors had applied).
   References 38 and 39 have been replaced by the ones suggested by Reviewer that is the references of Katz, Lawton and Brody have been added.

6. Formatting and Citations of all the references are checked again.

Thanks and Kind Regards

Mehreen Bhamani