Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge and attitudes of university students toward pandemic influenza: a crosssectional study from Turkey

Version: 1 Date: 17 March 2010

Reviewer: Holly Seale

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
An extensive review of the papers grammar and sentence structure is required

Abstract

Background
1. It would useful to provide some background information or context for this study. At the moment you are only providing the aim

Methods:
2. When was the survey available?
3. How was the survey delivered?
4. Please use the term self-administered questionnaire rather than self-answered questionnaire

Results:
5. In regards to the statement around perception of risk- with this risk for themselves or the family or the community? Please be more specific
6. It would be useful if the authors provided the raw data i.e. numerator/denominator
7. What type of media- were you specific in the questionnaire?

Introduction
8. I would encourage you to remove the information about influenza and how it effects/transmits. Given the amount of media and journal coverage on H1N1- I would think the average reader of this article is comfortable with that information now. I think it would be more interesting to report about the H1N1 situation in your country i.e when did it peak, number of cases, hospitalisations, deaths etc. Did the MOH change its pandemic policies or plans given that the H1N1 situation was milder than expected?
9. There is no reference to any previous work done in the country? Have there been any other studies?
10. Who was the H1N1 vaccine targeted at? Was it provided free in the country? Did the University have clinics?
11. What courses were targeted? Or was it open to any first year student?
12. How was the survey provided to students?
13. How were the open ended questions analysed?
14. Did the University provide any information to students or did they display any posters about the H1N1 pandemic?
15. Was the survey pilot tested with anyone prior to distribution?
16. What preventative methods were included? Were these measures suggested by the University or the MOH?
17. How were the questionnaires coded? Were they de-identified?
18. Was ethical approval sought for this study? Please provide details.
19. Please provide the version number for SPSS

Results
20. Was the participant’s representative of the student body at the University?
21. Please provide the raw numbers in the text i.e. numerator/denominator
22. You should use the term gender not sexuality
23. Be more specific when referring to risk perception- is this personal risk or average risk for the community?
24. In regards to information sources- when you refer to the term ‘media’ what are you referring to- print, visual? Also for ‘health personnel’- did you mean the respondents local doctor or someone from a hospital.
25. In regards to level of knowledge- it would be useful if the authors ranked the level of knowledge in the group based on the answers in table 6. Was their high level of knowledge? While the students may be aware of the situation- they may also have inaccurate knowledge about. This is an important area- low level of knowledge, may impact on risk perception and will in turn impact on vaccine uptake. I would start the results section with the information regarding and questions relating to knowledge.
26. Group the information about the reported vaccine uptake, effectiveness and attitudes towards vaccination together
27. It is not necessary to have both table one and two. I would suggest keeping table one and just commenting on the main findings from table 2 in the text.
28. Is there no other demographic information available about the students? If yes- that should theoretically be reported in the first table
29. Again table 4 is not necessary. The information in table 3 is enough

Discussion
30. In the second paragraph- you mention about the role of the mass media being the most popular information source. Does this finding corroborate with any other studies?
31. As the author correctly pointed out- it is hard to compare risk perception
studies. However, I think the authors could comment about the levels of risk reported in these comparative papers and then comment on how they have changed over the span of the pandemic. I think this would be more informative for the reader.

32. The paragraph around vaccination needs major revisions. As your paper is dealing with a certain populations KAP around vaccination- It would therefore be better to focus this paragraph on those main findings and then compare them to work done in previous studies. It may also be interesting to examine annual flu uptake in this population in your country.

33. Where is reference 32?

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'