Author's response to reviews

Title: Alcohol drinking patterns among high school students in Ethiopia: A cross-sectional study

Authors:

Ayalu A Reda (ayaluaklilu@yahoo.com)
Asmamaw Moges (mogesasme@yahoo.com)
Birhanu Yazew (yazbir@gmail.com)
Sibhatu Biadgilign (sibhatu2005@yahoo.com)

Version: 2 Date: 15 February 2012

Author's response to reviews:

Dear Reviewers

Thank you for taking the time to review the manuscript. We have made substantial revision based on the comments that we receive from you. The comments are well taken and addressed in the revised manuscript.

Title: Alcohol drinking patterns among high school students in Ethiopia: A cross-sectional study

General

We made substantial editions and formatting of the manuscript.

Specific

Reviewer: 1 Mei-Yu Yeh

Question 1: First, the Background section, no specific hypotheses are proposed based on an integrated model of the variables. At the very least, a clearer description of Ethiopia cultural issues in the manuscript and these notions might guide hypothesis generation. I was felt more confused by the literature based upon how the background was written than being assisted in understanding what we know and what this study might add to the field.

Response: We have now revised the manuscript accordingly.

Question: Second, the Method section is inadequate, pre-testing and the proportional stratified sampling lack of detail descriptions. How exactly did data collection and by what proportion and stratification? Why choice the YRBS questionnaire? Have not culture difference? How the validity and reliability of research instrument? Authors omit the importance to report the questionnaire. However, the Method section does not provide enough information on instrument selection and sampling methods. It is not known whether appropriate in the sampling method, instrument selection and there are any differences between nine schools have or not.
Response: We appreciate the comment. The stratification is to take the sample of students from each school and grades based on their enrollment size at the time of the study - this facilitates appropriate representation since a random sample taking all registers would make it difficult to access students and compromises response rates as well as privacy. The sampling is inclusive of all the nine high school. So there is no worry about the inclusion. The choice of YRBS questionnaire is made as it enables us to assess the risk behavior, one of which is related to alcohol consumption and pattern. And the questionnaire has a good validity and reliability according to previous studies. The instrument has been widely used in different countries to assess high school students to be participated in the Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System (YRBS). However, we admit that to our knowledge YRBS was used in this study only and that no validation studies have been conducted in the country.

Question: Third, the results section needs further improvement. The tables are not very clear, should be revised; table 2 and 3 may need to be consolidated, add some notes and descriptions.

Response: We take the comments and revised accordingly in the revised manuscript. Since table 2 is briefly describes on the frequency and pattern of alcohol use while table 3 shows the predictors of alcohol use among students so it becomes difficult to merge both tables.

Reviewer 2: Wisit chaveepojnkamjorn

Major Compulsory Revisions
The author must respond to these before a decision on publication can be reached. For example, additional necessary experiments or controls, statistical mistakes, errors in interpretation.

Response: We take the comments and revised accordingly in the revised manuscript

Introduction
1. Why was the study area (east Ethiopia) chosen? Please give good reason(s) in the manuscript.

Response: We take the comments. Eastern Ethiopia is selected as the authors are affiliated in the university, the paucity of research finding from that part of the country warrant for the understanding of the research topic to be dealt there. Furthermore, the existence of the habit of Khat chewing in the area were important considerations in conducting the study.

Materials and Methods
1. This is a cross-sectional study on human health. The proposal of this study was approved by Institutional research ethics review committee of Haramaya University. Add the document number and date for approval.

Response: Done.

2. Sample size was calculated? If yes, explain how to get it including formula for sample size (It depends on the objectives of study).
3. What is the difference between ever drinkers and current drinkers (give the details)? It should be added in the operational definition.
Response: Done. Current alcohol use is defined use of alcohol at least once during the past 30 days before the survey.

4. We should inform the legal license number of SPSS program version 15 because it is not free software.
Response: We do not have information on the licence number of the SPSS program. It is loaded on our office PCs through institutional subscription.

5. Give the details of logistic regression technique for this study.
Response: We have now added information on the steps used in constructing the logistic regression model. Information on inspection of multicollinearity and outliers is also added.

6. The study design should be more details, eg. The sampling technique (how to select samples)
Response: We first have the list of enrolled students in each school based on their grade. So we take stratification for each grade. Then we take sample from each grade from each school.

Analysis
1. It should be more details of drinking patterns in Table.
Response: We take the comment. We have now indicated the total sample and indicated that the numbers were based on the total number of respondents to each item.

2. Table 1: if some variables had unequal samples, it should be added the numbers in bracket.
Response: We take the comment

3. The 9th Graders was the majority (48.9%), give a reason to explain in the result.
Response: Thank you, this is a good observation. We have now included information in the discussion section. The results are also modified to indicate this important point.

4. Table 2: lack of quantity and frequency of drinkers.
Response: We take the comment. We did not gather data on the amount of alcohol drunk.

5. Table 3 of multiple logistic regression should be explained which variables were controlled.
Response: Variables controlled/adjusted include age, sex, grade etc of the students

CONCLUSION OF THE REVIEW
1. The study should be revised and several important information was missing.
Response: we take the comment and revised according to the comments that we received from the reviewers.

Reviewer: 3 R. Patti Herring

Question: I do not have any comments that the authors need to respond to.

Response: thank you for taking the time to review the manuscript.

Kindest regards,
Ayalu Reda, Also on behalf of all authors