Reviewer’s report

Title: Schistosomiasis Infection Among Primary School Students in a War Zone, Southern Kordofan State, Sudan

Version: 2 Date: 5 April 2013

Reviewer: Fiona Fleming

Reviewer’s report:

Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract:
1. Schistosomiasis does not need to be capitalised unless at the beginning of a sentence. This applies to the rest of the manuscript as well.
2. Preceding haematobium or mansoni – Schistosoma or S. (in italics) on first and subsequent iteration should be used NOT Schistosomiasis

Background:
3. ‘S. haematobium and S. mansoni are the two main species….’ This sentence infers that there are other species in Sudan. If this is not the case then change sentence to ‘S. haematobium and S. mansoni are the two species endemic to Sudan.’
4. The word ‘boarder’ is misspelt, it should be ‘border’
5. Third paragraph ‘Schistosomiasis has been identifies…’ should be identified.
6. Third paragraph ‘the lack of information on prevalence stalled …’ would be better as ‘the lack of information on distribution of schistosomiasis has stalled …’
7. (both types) should be corrected to (both species)

Methods:
8. Is ‘Admin Unit’ a proper noun and an abbreviation, or should it be ‘administrative unit’?
9. Why was it decided to take 7 to 8 students from each of the 8 grades in a school and not just sample from the grades which include the children aged 10 to 14 years i.e. those with the highest burden of schistosomiasis?
10. Paragraph 4, ‘The school data was linked…..’ should read ‘The school data were linked…..’ as data are plural. This should be checked and changes made throughout the manuscript.
11. The ‘Statistical Analysis’ subheading should be in bold
12. ‘Age was converted into categorical variable…’ should be corrected to ‘Age was converted into a categorical variable…’
13. What were the categorical variable cut off points and how were they suitable?
Results:
14. ‘Students were recruited from rural areas mainly (81.1%).’ should be corrected to ‘Students were manly recruited from rural areas (81.1%).’
15. ‘S. haematobium’ should be italicised
16. ‘Western area (34.6%)……..the eastern (16.1%)…’ be consistent, either make both with capital letters or don’t – this continues throughout this section
17. There needs to be consistency in how the p value is reported – sometimes it is (p=xxx) sometimes (p value = xxx).
18. Where there is reported risk presented as ‘(xxx times more risk)’ these should be given with the OR and 95% CI as they are earlier in the section.
19. The last four sentences in this section report results and then indicate they are shown in Table 4, which they are not. It needs to be explained clearly to the reader either how they were calculated or shown in Table 4.

Discussion:
20. Is there a reference for Western being a ‘poorer part of the state…’
21. ‘Indifferent’ should be corrected to ‘in different’
22. Why are the prevalence of schistosomiasis in Ghana and Malawi being referred to? How are they linked to the Sudan study? The reviewer does not think that they are relevant and should be excluded from the Discussion.
23. Using CCA would add nothing to the results as it would only report presence or absence of schistosomiasis infection. Do the authors mean a urine dipstick to test for haematuria?

References:
24. The style of references is not consistent in each listed. Can the authors check each one and also make sure they correspond to the journal’s expectations.

Appendices/Supporting documents:
25. These are not referenced in the manuscript. If they are not be included they need to be referred to.
26. Are these the Questionnaires used? Can they be better formatted for presentation in the journal?

27. The reviewer feels that there are still many grammatical errors within the paper (more than have been listed as there are too many to list). The manuscript could benefit from a colleague of the authors, with strong English language skills, to review it further and suggest improvements.
28. There is poor formatting and layout throughout i.e. one sentence paragraphs (first two paragraphs in the Results section)
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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'