Author's response to reviews

Title: Knowledge, Attitude and Practice towards Voluntary Counseling and Testing among University Students in North West Ethiopia: a cross sectional study.

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Version: 3 Date: 11 April 2013

Author's response to reviews: see over
Author’s Response to Reviews

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Version: 3 Date: 11 April 2013

Author’s Response to Reviews: See over
Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge, Attitude and Practice towards Voluntary Counseling and Testing among University Students in North West Ethiopia: a cross sectional study.

Version: 2 Date: 19 February 2013

Reviewer: Tarja Suominen

Reviewer's report:

The article is of valuable topic however I like to make several comments of the manuscript in its present form to improve it.

General

It would be helpful to write clear research questions. Now the purpose is structured based on 3 areas, like knowledge, attitudes and practice. You should base the research questions also on these 3. Now you have divided knowledge to general knowledge and related to VCT practices. This is not logic. Please structure on 3 and structure the instruments, results, discussion phase also based on the same structure to have logic text. In knowledge you just have the subareas also, general knowledge and knowledge of VCT.

- We have accepted the given comment and structured the method, result and discussion into 3 parts. The segment that talks about general knowledge about HIV/AIDS was removed from the manuscript.

Abstract

1. The sentence starting About 89.3% … is not clear.

- The statement was modified as follows “From the study participants 86.3% were knowledgeable on VCT, 73.3% had positive attitude towards VCT for HIV and 61.8% had had VCT for HIV in the past.”
2. Furthermore, what do you mean by outcome variables is not clear, because you are not using this concepts in the other parts of the manuscript.
   - The word “outcome” is changed to “dependant variable”

3. Also, from the abstract is not clear what you mean with these stigma and discrimination, because you are not writing later on how they are measured. In order to understand the results you should write/list all the background questions asked.
   - This was mentioned in the result section of the main manuscript under sub heading “practice of VCT for HIV”. It was described as follows “Fear of positive results, fear of stigma and discrimination, partner and self trust and partner refusal were the reasons mentioned for not attending VCT services by 106 (84.1%), 74 (58.7%), 18 (14.8%) and 6 (4.8%) of the respondents respectively.”

Background

1. The statistical numbers are from the year 2008, just wondering whether there are not newer ones.
   - Recent data is added.

Methods

1. Clear research questions needed. No need to say the name of the university, anonymity. University being the oldest one, no need to write.
   - The reviewers comment is fully accepted and the name of the university is deleted.

2. How did you select the campus, the information should be added, was that random or purposeful?
   - The campus selection was purposeful and it is indicated in the revised version.
3. Who and how the campus registrar was received, which kind of permissions were received for that.
   - The list of students was obtained from the campus registrar office after obtaining permission from the registrar office head.

4. Did the researchers themselves receive the home addresses of the students or where there some contact person at the university campus?
   - The home address of the students (rural/urban) was obtained from the questionnaires filled by the students in part I, which deals with sociodemographic variables.

5. How the data collection really happened is unclear. How the written consent was received? Was it sent before or at the same time with the questionnaire to the students?
   - The written consent form was given to the students with the questionnaire and they signed on it after thoroughly reading it.

6. What changes were made based on the pilot is not informed.
   - Based on the pilot improvement was made on the attitude questions since they looked knowledge questions and this indicated in the revised manuscript.

7. All asked background factors should be listed in order to understand the results.
   - Done as per the given comment.

8. Avoid the writing style HIV/AIDS, not recommended any more.
   - Done as per the comment given.

9. Chr. alpha values are given to knowledge and attitudes parts of the questionnaire, however limitations and validity and reliability of the instrument and the study is not discussed in other ways. So, for example where the researchers satisfied later on how they measured e.g. practice.
The limitation is indicated after the discussion

10. Ethical issues should be discussed more, e.g. the relationships of the researchers to the university and students and how written consent was received.

• Done as per the given comment and included in the ethical consideration of the revised manuscript.

Results

1. The most problematic issue in this article is the statistical analysis and the results based on it. For example if some received in knowledge “area” the result 4.86, she had good knowledge, but if he received 4.84 he had poor knowledge, the mean was 4.85 and the division of the respondents were made in two groups based on the mean. Then the analysis continued with looking these groups based on some background factors. So, what does this kind of results mean for practice?

• This is the point that we completely share with the reviewer. But this is limitation of using mean and it is now indicated in the limitation.

Conclusion

This is now more like repetition of the results.

• Corrected as per the given comment

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.
Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge, Attitude and Practice towards Voluntary Counseling and Testing among University Students in North West Ethiopia: a cross sectional study.

Version: 2 Date: 26 December 2012

Reviewer: Michael Johnson Mahande

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract

Background

…..Voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) is one among different approaches which have been implemented as an attempt to slow the spread of HIV infection and minimize its impact at the individual, family and society level.

• Done as per the comment

Methods

A cross sectional study was conducted…… using a stratified sampling method to enroll students from different faculties into the study. A total of 330 university students filled in a self-administered questionnaire with response rate of 97.3%. Main outcome measures included level of knowledge, attitude and practice of Voluntary Counseling and Testing for HIV/AIDS. A chi-square test was used to determine an association between a number of independent factors and outcome of interest.

• Done as per the comment
Result

…..Majority (75.6%) of the respondents were Orthodox with 63% reported living in urban areas before joining the university. Fear of positive results, stigma and discrimination following the positive results were reported as main barriers for VCT uptake.

- Done as per the comment

Conclusion

…….The findings reveal important barriers for VCT uptake and suggest strategies to reduce stigma and discrimination

- Done as per the comment

Main text

Background

…. By the year 2010, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated 34 million people living with HIV and an estimated 1.8 million deaths around the world.

- Done as per the comment

Methods

Study area, Study design and study period

This was a cross sectional study conducted among university students of Gondar in Ethiopia from February to May, 2010. The University of ……

- Done as per the comment, but the name of the university is not mentioned for ethical issues.
Do not repeat the objective of the study (delete to assess knowledge, attitude and practice of students on VCT for HIV). Please indicate the sampling method (this look like a stratified/a multistage)

- Comment accepted and the following statement was added in sample size and sampling technique part “The sampling technique employed was multistage sampling technique; stratified sampling followed by simple random sampling technique.”

Data management and analysis

Rephrase: A p-value of < 0.05 was considered to be statistically significant.

- Done as per the comment

Results

Sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents

2nd line: rephrase by deleting the word have: A total of 330 (97.3%) subjects completed the questionnaire

- Comment accepted and rephrased as follows “A total of 330 (97.3%), subjects completed the questionnaire among whom 218 (66.1%) were males”.

General knowledge of the respondents about HIV/AIDS

2nd line: replace the word accordingly with most. Also replace the word score with scored

- This portion of the manuscript is now deleted as per the comment given by the other reviewer.

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