Author's response to reviews

Title: Prevalence and Factors Determining Psychoactive Substance (PAS) use among Hawassa University (HU) Undergraduate Students, Hawassa Ethiopia

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Covering Letter Describing Revisions in this Version of the Manuscript

PART One: Answer for referee one comment

Major compulsory revisions

Introduction

The first sentence need references: « Psycho Active Substance (PAS) use is becoming well known for compromising the health status and also claiming the death of millions’ life every year ».

Answer: restated and references given as (see ref no 48 & 49)
-The aim of the study was to establish prevalence of PASs and their determinants among undergraduate students of Hawassa University. A recent study published in BMC Public Health (Ref 6) was about the same topic: « Psychoactive substances use and associated factors among Axum university students, Axum Town, North Ethiopia »: what are the differences with the study of the authors?

Answer: These studies actually address similar objectives. But the difference is the area where they are located. Axum University is found at the northern border of the country where as Hawassa University is located at the Southern Part of Ethiopia. (Both are located in different states). The other difference is that we used WHO model core questionnaire which is used most preferable for international comparison of findings

Substances like alcohol and khat were reported to be abused by 84% and 54% of students of one Kenya private university respectively [6-8] but Reference 6 referred to a study in Ethiopia and Ref 7 in Nigeria

Comment accepted and mistake corrected (see Ref no 60 and 61)

-Reference about the death caused by PAS should be more recent than Reference 2 (2003)

Comment accepted: additional references are given (see ref No 48 & 49)

-Substances like alcohol and khat were reported to be abused by 84% and 54% of students of one Kenya private university respectively [6-8] but Reference 6 refered to a study in Ethiopia and Ref 7 in Nigeria
Comment accepted and independent citation given for each country (see ref No 59-66)

**Methods**

The authors did not indicate the precision they chose to calculate the sample Size: The sample size needed in surveys depends upon the precision of Estimates desired.

**Answer:**
Our precision is mentioned in another phrase that is “5% margin of error” or 0.05% (ref No 93)

The authors used 22% as prevalence of substance use but is it a lifetime or a Current use?

**Answer:**
It’s for the past 12 Month. In one of the Unpublished study conducted at Mekele University of Ethiopia, we found a life time prevalence of overall PAS use to be 82.7. But we selected Addis Ababa university students (22.0). Preferring to slightly increase the sample size (see ref No 91)

Definitions used by the authors were : « Lifetime substance use in this study refers to respondents who admitted to having ever used at least one of the substances listed in the questionnaire. » « ‘Current prevalence’ denotes proportion of students who used substance within 30 days preceding the study. » However in the tables of results we found also the consumption in the past 12 months that it was not indicate in the methods.

**Comment accepted**

And additional operational definition also added to define Prevalence of PAS use within the past 12 months Operational definition is added and edited (see ref no 125-130)

« Bivariate analysis was done and variables with p-value less than 0.05 were Included in the multiple logistic regression analysis »: it is usually include p-value Less than 0.20 in the logistic regression

**Comment Accepted:**

We did the analysis again and took those factors affecting PAS use with p-value < 0. 2 (see ref no 134) to be included in the final multiple logistic regression analysis. And fortunately another Factor affecting students PAS use in the past 12 month was found. This is “living alone during School age”. We also changed the table and (See table-4) or ref No 426-430)
Results
-The authors have to standardize the presentation of numbers in the results: either 0, 1, 2 or 3 numbers after the point were presented in the text or in tables.

Comment Accepted
Correction made throughout
Few sentences were redundant with results in table 5 « Those students who reported that their family use PAS were more likely to use PASU in the past year as compared to those students whose family didn’t use PAS (adjusted OR = 2.745, 95% CI = 1.678-4.490)

Comment accepted
See table 4

- The table 1 was not clear and some results were wrong: for example:
  • Age 20-24 total : 468/586 = 79.8% and not 69.2% as indicated ;
  • 419 total of male for the age (total male was 479) ;
  • 81.43% proportion of male (for the 3 last categories) : it was 81.7% ;

Comments accepted:
All computational errors corrected (see table 1)

• No percentage were indicated for the total of father’s educational level
Comments accepted:
Missed information added (see Table 1)
• In the table 2, why the total exceeded 100% (abuses PAS) or were inferior to 100% (drunk alcohol) ?

Comment accepted and it was corrected. But, as per the comment given by another reviewer, we removed the information about khat and alcohol as it to be more specific in this manuscript and preparation of another manuscript may be considered

- Why were not all the items presented in the table 5 as in the table 6?
Comment Accepted
But we removed table-6 due to the reason stated above

Discussion

-Male students are a large proportion of the students (81.7%), is it representative of the students or is it sure estimate?

Answer
It is representative. The proportion of female students attending Hawassa University and as well all other Ethiopian universities are lesser compared with male students
There were too many results in the discussion: only the main results must be presented and discussed

Comment accepted
We have tried to focus only prevalence and over all PAS use and result and discussion part about khat and alcohol including tables all removed from this manuscript

Authors argued « This deference may be linked to the study time differences, Culture » but the study was conducted in 2011 and the reference 6 is a study Conducted in Ethiopia and in 2012: then in the same country and only one year After the study of the authors

Comment accepted
In order to further explain more. Of course we believe that it may be logical to consider time difference as a possible factor to explain the case. But we have tried to incite more references in addition to the previously mentioned article (see ref no 182-193)

Minor essential revisions
- « Revelin » was first cited in the BMJ in 2000 by Plant M (before Reference 15).

As it has been used as a validity check in students core questionnaire, we preferred to incite WHO students substance questionnaire but (ref no 101,111,112 & 349-3510

- Presentation of the references must to be reviewed: Initial of the First name is required and not the whole first name

Comment accepted and corrected
We have tried to rearrange it throughout all reference (see ref no 308-385)