Author’s response to reviews

Title: Strengthening Contact Tracing Capacity of Pulmonary tuberculosis Patients in Enugu, Southeast Nigeria: A Targeted and Focused Health Education Intervention

Authors:

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Version: 4 Date: 27 June 2014

Author's response to reviews: see over
RE-SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPT ENTITLED: STRENGTHENING CONTACT TRACING CAPACITY OF PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS PATIENTS IN ENUGU, SOUTHEAST NIGERIA: A TARGETED AND FOCUSED HEALTH EDUCATION INTERVENTION STUDY

We wish to re-submit the above manuscript with corrections made according to the recommendations made by the two reviewers and the editor. The responses are as stated in the next pages below.

In this era of TB/HIV co-infection and collaborative activities, with the MDG targeted year in view; any study such as this that would enhance early detection and management of TB diseases should be encouraged. This is more so in environments that stigmatize and discriminate against persons suffering from TB disease. This will help us to achieve the set targets of detecting at least 70% of the estimated infectious cases, to cure at least 85% of the detected cases and to reduce by 2015 TB prevalence and death rates by 50% relative to the 1990 level. Increasing case finding and detection is the first step wise direction to achieving the laudable MDG goals. In this article, targeted educational intervention technique has been used successful to improve TB case finding by enhancing the contact tracing skills of the TB patients that enabled them to reach out to their household contacts and subsequently bring them for screening and treatment. Publishing this work will help make the findings far reaching as to fulfill the intended objectives.

Yours sincerely
Dr. Osa-eloka C. Ekwueme
Dr. Babatunde I. Omotowo
Dr. K.K Agwuna
Author’s response to reviews 1

Title: Strengthening contact tracing capacity of pulmonary tuberculosis patients in Enugu, southeast Nigeria: a targeted and focused health education intervention study

Authors: Osa-eloka Christiandolus Ekwueme

Babatunde I. Omotowo

Agwuna K. K

Version: 2
Date: 8 April 2014

Reviewer: YUAN TIAN

Reviewer’s report:
I read your article with interest. The article highlights the importance of education program in TB control, in particular contact tracing. It also clearly summarizes its own finding and previously existing research. The manuscript writing is a bit redundant which need further revisions.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. In the 2nd paragraph of the results, "62.5%%" need to be corrected. In discussion, "Tb patients" also need to be corrected.

In the result section, paragraph 2, line 5, 62.2% has been corrected to read 62.2%

2. Use consistent name for TB patients. Sometimes you use TB patients, sometimes you use tuberculosis patients. It will be nice if you could use consistent name, e.g TB patients.

Yes, there is inconsistency in the use of ‘tuberculosis patients’ and ‘TB patients’. In the document, tuberculosis patients have been replaced with TB patients: Introduction paragraph 3, line 4, paragraph 6, line 5, paragraph 7, line 4; Methodology, intervention section, paragraph 1, line 5, paragraph 2, line 3; Result section paragraph 2, line 1; Discussion paragraph 3, line 7, paragraph 9, line 22.

3. A few sentences stating the limitation of your study in the discussion section.
In the discussion, a section titled limitations and generalization of the findings has been added.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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
Author’s response to reviews 2

Title: Strengthening contact tracing capacity of pulmonary tuberculosis patients in Enugu, southeast Nigeria: a targeted and focused health education intervention study

Authors: Osa-eloka Christiandolus Ekwueme

Babatunde I. Omotowo

Agwuna K. K

REVIEWER: PROF. MARGARET O. ARAOYE.

REVIEWER’S COMMENTS

ABSTRACT: This section should be included, unless the Journal does not require this section.

A structured abstract of 350 words has been re-submitted with this revision

BACKGROUND: In the last sentence replace “assessing” with accessing.

In the last sentence of the background, the word ‘assessing’ has been replaced with ‘accessing’

MATERIALS AND METHODS

“By simple random sampling method, using balloting system” should be deleted. The authors already described the multi-stage technique which showed both random and purposive.

In the methodology, last sentence of paragraph 5, “By simple random sampling method, using balloting system” has been deleted as recommended.

“Three trained research assistance administered the questionnaire”. I suggest that the underlined word should be replaced with assistants.

The word assistance has been replaced with assistants in Paragraph 11, line 3 of the methodology

“Categorical variables were compared between the two groups, the study and the control groups and where necessary using Chi-square test and student T –test at p<0.05 level of significance and 95 percent confidence interval”. I suggest that the underlined word be replaced with Selected.
In the last paragraph of the methodology section, line 2, the word “categorical” variables has been replaced with “selected” variables

“65.3% and 62.5% of the study group in each case knew that crowded conditions and poor housing are risk factors of TB transmission against 21.5% and 22.1% respectively in the control group. Over 70% of the study group in each case knew the various methods of TB control compared to less than 50% in the control group’. This sentence should be reframed to avoid starting with digits/number and to make it clearer, avoiding the word “case”. E.g.; Among the study group, 65.3% and 62.5% respectively knew that crowded conditions and poor housing are risk factors of TB transmission against 21.5% and 22.1% in the control group.

Yes, the kind suggestion of the reviewer about rewording the above sentences in the result section, paragraph 2, line 5, has been effected. The sentence now reads: “Among the study group, 65.3% and 62.5% respectively knew that crowded conditions and poor housing are risk factors of TB transmission against 21.5% and 22.1% in the control group. Over 70% of the study group additionally knew each of the various methods of TB control compared to less than 50% in the control group”.

RESULTS: Make reference to table 8 in the last sentence of this section.

Table 8 has been referred to in the last sentence of result section as follows: “Prevalence of tuberculosis among the contacts of the study and control groups at baseline and post-intervention were 19.4% and 13.7%; and 26.9% and 28.9% respectively as shown in table 8”.

DISCUSSION: Ensure correct sequencing of references from no.19 in the Background section.

The references in the main text starting from ref no. 19 in the last paragraph of the background section have been correctly sequenced. Ref. 19 is found in last sentence of paragraph 6 in the background section; ref. 20 in the participants’ section last sentence; ref 21 in the intervention section second paragraph, line 1; ref 22 in intervention section fourth paragraph line 7. Discussion section began with ref. no 23, and ended with ref. no. 34.

CONCLUSION: There is need to sharpen this section. It should address the stated objective “This study is aimed at improving the contact tracing knowledge and skills to bring TB contacts for screening among tuberculosis patients assessing treatment at the major TB centre in Enugu State, Nigeria.
The conclusion statements have been resized, rephrased and sharpened to reflect the objective of the study as follows:

Focused and targeted health education intervention has been successfully used in this study to strengthen contact tracing knowledge and skills of TB patients to bring their contacts for screening at the major TB centre in Enugu State, Nigeria. At baseline, the awareness, knowledge, and practice of bringing contacts for screening among the TB patients were grossly poor. Post intervention, there was significant improvement in the number of TB contacts brought for screening among the study group, unlike in the control group. These finding have great implication on TB case management, and invariably on the global goal of reducing TB prevalence and death rates by 50% relative to 1990 level by 2015, and eliminating TB as a public health problem by 2050. Policy is hereby advocated on the use of formal, planned, coordinated, and participatory intensive health education intervention to improve the contact tracing skills of TB patients at the major TB centre in Enugu State, Nigeria.

REMARKS
This paper contributes to knowledge. After the few editorial corrections suggested, I recommend that the paper be accepted for publication.

PROF. MARGARET O. ARAOYE.
Author’s response to Editor’s Comments

Editor's Comments:

"This is an article of interest to the public health community, particularly those working in disease control. The authors however need to address the points below before this manuscript can be considered for publication:

1. As this was quasi experimental study, the author should follow the relevant reporting guideline, i.e. the Transparent Reporting of Evaluations with Nonrandomized Designs (TREND) statement.

   Relevant reporting guideline of Transparent Reporting of Evaluations with Non-randomized Designs has been adopted. Title has been included in the main document. The abstract has been structured, with target population and study sample clearly stated. The introduction has detailed on the scientific literature, justification and rationale for the study. Information on participants’ recruitment including sample method has been organized under the subheading “Participants”. Intervention activities were detailed in the subsection “intervention”. Contents, delivery methods, setting and time intervals were all included in that section. Study design, sample size estimation and sampling procedure were all included. Method of data collection and analysis were detailed. Results, discussions and conclusion including section on limitation and generalization of data were included.

2. In particular, the authors need to discuss study limitations and generalization to setting beyond the study site.

   A section has been added on the limitations and generalization of findings after the discussion

3. The authors need to provide precision of their estimates, e.g. 95% CI of percentages.

   95% CI of the percentages have been included for all the percentage proportions in all the eight tables

4. The authors also still need to update the discussion with current references as there has been many recent publications on TB contact tracing which could enrich the discussion.

   A new article on TB contact tracing among adults has been added and referenced Ref No. 34
5. The authors need to reformat figures and tables to follow standard practices, e.g. avoid three dimension chart, delete vertical lines in tables."

Tables have been reformatted. Three dimension chart avoided for figure 1. All the vertical lines on the tables deleted.

Additional Editorial Request:

1.) Title Page

Please include a title page at the front of your manuscript file. It should contain, at minimum, the names, institutions, countries and email addresses of all authors, and the full postal address of the submitting author.

The Title page and required information have been added in the main document

2.) Abstract

Please provide an abstract formatted according to the guidelines for authors <http://www.biomedcentral.com/info/ifora/abstracts>.

Abstract has been formatted and structured according to journal prescription: Background, methods, Results, and Conclusions. This corrected re-submission has the same abstract as entered in the submission system in the main document.

Please note that the abstract in your manuscript file differs from the abstract entered in the submission system - please correct so they are consistent with each other.

3.) Copyediting

A local journal editor with proficiency in English has assisted in improving the writing style and use of English.

We would be grateful if you could address the comments in a revised manuscript and provide a cover letter giving a point-by-point response to the concerns.