Author's response to reviews

Title: Developing and implementing an Accreditation system for Health Promoting Schools in Northern India: A cross-sectional study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Cover Letter

To,
The Editor,
BMC Public Health

Subject: - Re-submission of manuscript for publication in BMC Public Health

Sir/Madam,

Please find enclosed our manuscript entitled, ‘Developing and implementing an Accreditation system for Health Promoting Schools in Northern India: A cross-sectional study’ which we would like to resubmit for publication as a research article in journal, ‘BMC Public Health’. We confirm that this manuscript has not been published elsewhere and is not under consideration by another journal. All authors have approved the manuscript and agree with its submission to  **BMC Public Health**.

The comment wise reply to the reviewers’ comment has been given below:

**Comment:** The authors have followed the WHO guidelines and work in other countries in developing indicators (table 2). It should be a brief description on process of ensuring reliability as well as establishing face and content validity. It would be difficult to conduct criterion validation and the principles have already been well established. However some pilot testing on the instruments should have been performed. If not, the authors would discuss how they would ensure reliability and validity.

**Reply:** The checklist on health promoting schools was pilot tested in 8 schools of Chandigarh. Following methods were used to ensure both reliability and validity of the tool.

- The reliability analysis of the questionnaire was done and the cronbach alpha of .7 was obtained, which is acceptable as per the classification of George and Mallery (2003).
- A detailed training was given to the observers to maintain both inter-observer and intra-observer reliability.
• Three observers from different educational backgrounds were trained on using the questionnaire and all three collected data from one school and a good Kappa agreement was reached among the observers. Intra-observer reliability was also ensured by good training.

• For ensuring face validity, stakeholders like principal of selected schools and physicians were asked to rate: whether the checklist questions was “easy to navigate” or “difficult to navigate”; checklist length was “too long” or “too short” or “just right”. They were asked to suggest any question that was not relevant for this tool and what else should have been included. After this exercise, a revised draft of the checklist incorporating their feedback was included and finalized. The policies and activities being conducted by the participating schools further strengthened the face validity of the tool.

• For ensuring content validity, the tool was given to the experts for review and it was also discussed in the stakeholders’ meetings before the tool was finalized.

The necessary changes have been incorporated in the results section (development phase) in line no. 181 and page no.8.

Yours sincerely,

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