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
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 editor’s comment has been given below:

1. **Comment:** Did the 17 schools self-select?

   **Reply:** School Health Program Team, Chandigarh Administration organized a sensitization meeting with the public and private schools in Chandigarh. A meeting was also held with the education department, Chandigarh Administration. Based on the inputs from the education department and the public and private schools, the schools which volunteered to participate in the development of accreditation for Health Promoting Schools (HPS) were included in the study. The revisions have been made in the manuscript in the methods section (Line No. 138-143).

2. **Comment:** How did the initial sampling proceed - randomly amongst all schools in Chandigarh or purposive for these specific 17 schools?

   **Reply:** The schools in which the school management gave consent and agreed to introduce HPS intervention were included.

3. **Comment:** If random, is there a way of capturing which schools did not self-select to join the study?

   **Reply:** The participation of schools was purely on the voluntary basis.
4. **Comment:** Report the demographic characteristics of each of the 17 schools in a table regardless of the sampling and whether they are private or government. Number of students, socio-economic indicators which give an indication of the affluence of each of the school e.g. numbers of teachers, annual turnover in $$\$, government assistance, number of student to teacher ratio - anything that will give an indication of the equity implications of rolling out accreditation to all schools in India and elsewhere."

**Reply:** The demographic characteristics of all the 17 schools have been revised, included and highlighted in the Table 1. The important highlights of the table have been described in the manuscript in the methods section (Line No. 145-148).

Yours sincerely,

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