Author's response to reviews

Title: Impacts of Pharmaceutical Promotion On Prescribing Decisions of General Practitioners

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Dear Editor,

BMC Public Health

We thank to the Editorial Office and the two reviewers because of their comments and contributions to our manuscript MS: 131583931156542. Here is the cover letter including the point by point responses to the requested major-minor and discretionary revisions and the formatting changes.

Major compulsory revisions

Reviewer: Barbara Mintzes

1) Specific hypothesis were mentioned in the last paragraph of the "Background" section before our aim. To test the hypothesis, additional analyses were performed and shown at Table 3. Binary logistic regression was tried to find the determinants of the impact of pharmaceutical promotion but no considerable model could be created. This was possibly due to relative small sample size. This issue was also mentioned in the "Discussion" section.

2) Methodology of the study was detailed at the "Methods" section. The study site, study population was detailed. As the reviewer mentioned, the participation rate was very high. The Regional Health Directorate of Erzurum encouraged the GPs to participate to the study. Additionally second and third visits to the GPs were also performed to increase the participation. These issues might minimize the refuses. The issue of repeated visits was also mentioned and explained in the "Methods" section.

3) The survey method of the questionnaire and its includings were explained in details and the measurement of the questions was also detailed in the "Methods" section.

4) Exploratory hypothesis were mentioned in the last paragraph of the "Background" section and tested with 'chi-square' analyses.

Minor essential revisions

Reviewer: Barbara Mintzes

1) A reference to location was added to the title.

2) Abstract was formed according to journal format.

3) The number and percent of respondents were mentioned at the beginning of the "Results" section.
4) Tables of the manuscript were reformed and the meanings of the chi-square analyses were detailed and were formed into more informative sentences. Most of the "Results" section was rewritten according to the reviewers' comments and contributions.

Discretionary Revisions

Reviewer: Barbara Mintzes

1) Analysis regarding patient per day and patient per time was enriched. Correlation between these two factors was performed. Patient per day was also used as a determinant of the impact. The relation between patient per day and frequency of sales representatives visits was also analysed. The issue of shortage of GPs was discussed at the second paragraph of the "Discussion".

2) Correlation between time per patient vs patient per day was tested with Spearman Correlation and was found to correlate highly. It was added to "Results" section.

3) We explained the questionnaire in details in the "Methods" section.

4) The interesting analysis like the relations between patient per day vs impact of pharmaceutical promotion, work setting vs patient per day, participation to educational activities vs impact of pharmaceutical promotion were performed and shown at "Results" section.

5) Tables were reformed. The issue of the distribution of educational activities that were participated was mentioned at 3rd paragraph of the "results" section. It was also discussed.

6) In order to be sure about the reliance of self reported information, the GPs who stated that they were affected "sometimes" were excluded in analysis that shows the determinants of being affected by pharmaceutical promotion. It was aimed to increase the reliance and clarify the impact.

7) The effect of frequency of visits were tested and discussed.

8) There was only one literature in this region which studied the job satisfaction. It was not published internationally. It was available in the library of Ataturk University. It was used and shown at "Reference" section as unpublished public health speciality thesis.

9) The official organization of the pharmaceutical promotion in Turkey was discussed at the last paragraph of "Discussion".

Major compulsory revisions

Reviewer: Richard Kravitz

1) An abstract was formed according to journal format.

2) The sampling strategy, target population, response rate and survey methods were rewritten and detailed at "Methods" section.

3) The questions which were asked to the GPs were detailed and the measurement of the questions were also mentioned at "Methods" section.

Minor essential revisions

Reviewer: Richard Kravitz
1) Table 1 was reformed. The calculation of patient per day was detailed at 3rd paragraph of "Study Design and subjects".

2) All of the tables were reformed.

3) The GPs were asked whether they were affected by the promotion of pharmaceutical representatives as yes-always/yes-sometimes/no. In order to be sure of the impact, only the GPs who stated to be affected as "yes-always" were accepted as being affected. In order to be sure about the reliance of self reported information, the GPs who stated that they were affected "sometimes" were excluded in analysis that shows the determinants of being affected by pharmaceutical promotion. It was aimed to increase the reliance and clarify the impact.

4) The sentence which you mentioned "In this study, the pharmaceutical industry was the main provider of drug information..." was deleted. The "Discussion" was edited and reformed in the light of new analyses and findings.

Discretionary Revisions
Reviewer: Richard Kravitz
Not existing.

Formatting changes

The manuscript was reformed according to journal rules.

1) A competing interest section was added after "Conclusions".

2) An author's contribution section which explains the role of all authors in details after "Competing interests".

3) An "acknowledgment" was added after "Author's contribution".

4) Ethics and consents were explained in the "Methods" section with a subtitle.