General
Sub-Saharan Africa carries an unfair share of the global HIV/AIDS burden and the youths are at a high risk. The public also considers health professionals including those undergoing training as role models of health seeking behaviour. Therefore, the evaluation of students’ knowledge, attitude and uptake of VCT is important. More so, that VCT serves as an entry point to behaviour change, treatment, care and support.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1. The authors should clearly justify the conduct of this study in the background section. This could include the fact that they are youths engaging in high risk sexual practices, occupational exposure, role model status of health care professionals/trainees and may be dearth of information regarding this group in the study area.

2. Methods and statistics are appropriately described. However, the following needs to be addressed.
   a. The questionnaire used for this study should be adequately described. If it is original, how was it validated? If the questions were adopted from an existing tool, it should be referenced.
   b. The extensive description of the selection of research assistants is not necessary and should be deleted. Instead, the sampling techniques used in selecting respondents should be clearly described.
   c. Data management and statistical analysis should be described in detail. For instance, how were quantitative variables analysed? How were categorical variables analysed. Which statistical tests were used to test for significance of association between categorical variables?

Results
a. The authors calculated the required sample size for the study to be, but in the report section, they reported that 309 students were involved in the study. Although a higher sample size doesn’t vitiate a study, the authors need to indicate that the calculated sample size was a minimum sample size and that
they administered the questionnaires to 309 students.

Table 1: This table should be reformatted, in its present form it is confusing as some of the numbers have shifted.

Table 2: There is also the need to re-align some of the numbers

Table 3: The Pearson’s Chi square test used to assess association between sexual exposure and perceived risk is not valid because one of the cells of the 2 by 2 contingency table has an expected count of less than 5. The Fisher exact test would be more appropriate here.

Table 4: Should show knowledge of VCT by professional group, year of study, Age group of student and Religion

Table 5: This table should show factors associated with having had VCT. For example, Religion, professional group, Age group, year of study, awareness of existence of VCT centres etc.

Table 6: Importance of knowing HIV status should have a category for “No”, even if no respondent chose this option.

Table 7: Replace title with preferred mode of provision of VCT services to students

Figure 1: Delete and give results as narrative

Figure 2: Delete completely

Figure 3: Delete completely

Discussion

a. What were the limitations of this study?
b. What are the implications of the findings of this study for training institutions, health care program managers and health care practitioners?

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper? No.

Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this paper? No.

Do you have any other financial competing interests? No.

Are there any non-financial competing interests you would like to declare in relation to this paper?

The only interest that I could mention here is, that I'm working in the field of research on knowledge, attitudes and uptake of VCT among different groups, too. Thus, I'm interested in publications from various settings and countries. However, I do not know the authors of this paper and my papers are not mentioned in their manuscript, thus, I have no competing interests rather than scientific interests in a paper of my research field.