Author’s response to reviews

Title: The prevalence of recto-vaginal colonization and antimicrobial susceptibility pattern of Group B Streptococcus among near term pregnant mothers attending ANC in two referral hospitals in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Zufan Lakew Woldu (MD) Associate Professor Gynecology and Obstetrics Addis Ababa University, School of Medicine, Department of Ob-GY Tel: +251 91220019, E mail: zufan_lakew@yahoo.com Tatek Gebreegziabher Teklehaimanot (MSC) Medical laboratory technology Addis Ababa University, School of Medicine Tikur Anbassa Hospital Tel: 251911644338, E mail: tatekgeher@yahoo.com Sisay Teklu Waji MD Assistant Professor Gynecology and Obstetrics Addis Ababa University, School of Medicine, Department of Ob-GY Tel: 251 911227806, E mail: siteet@yahoo.com P.O. BOX: 27954/1000 AA, Ethiopia Mahlet Yigeremu Gebremariam MD

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Version: 3 Date: 2 July 2014

Author’s response to reviews: see over
Author's covering letter for initial submission

**Title:** The prevalence of Group B Streptococcus recto-vaginal colonization and antimicrobial susceptibility pattern in pregnant mothers at two Hospitals of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

**Authors:**

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 28 June 2014

**Comments:** see over
Dear editor:

Thank you for taking your time to edit and arrange the review process for the manuscript entitled “The prevalence of recto-vaginal colonization and antimicrobial susceptibility pattern of Group B Streptococcus among near term pregnant mothers attending ANC in two referral hospitals in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia” submitted to your journal for publication. On behalf of the authors I would like to express my appreciation for the meticulous review and professional comments forwarded by both the editors and the reviewers. This by itself is the testimony for the credibility and high standard of your journal. Your comments are constructive and I am sure they will increase the quality of our manuscript. All of the comments are accommodated in this new submission and point-by-point response to the comments is included in this cover letter following each comments. The title of the manuscript is also shortened as suggested by the reviewer.

Reviewer: Rooyen Maveryengwa Reviewer's report: Major compulsory revisions:

1. There is need to clarify why written consent was not sought from the participants.

   As we have put in this reviewed article, because of low literacy rate, the consent paper, which was approved by the research committee, was read to the participants before verbal consent was taken.

2. There is also need to explain why no ethical board approved the study including authorities at the Hospitals. It was approved by the ethics committee.

3. The details of the specific antibiotic testing techniques should be described and the ranges or cut off points for sensitive and resistant spelt out.

4. The references used mostly are old of which more than 86% are older than 10 years. Updated.

5. There is need to cite more recent African studies done on prevalence of GBS. Done

6. Table 1 is not referred to in the text. Done

Minor essential revisions

1. Shorten title by taking out "near term" and attending ANC" and "referral" Done

2. Include aspect of risk factors in objective. Done

3. page 2-under last sentence under Results..All "isolates" is missing. For antibiotics use small letters for the first letter of the name of the antibiotic. Done

Conclusion needs to be reformulated because 7.2% is not high compared to current results from other African countries. Include prevalence in key words. Take care to space words properly. Done
4. page 3-Space words properly, use more recent references. Refer to recent African studies. Done

5. page 4-write GA and the two Hospitals in full. Done

6. page 5-Refer to the appropriate reference rather than just stating "Gondar study". First sentence on this page is a repetition of what has already been stated. Briefly explain what quota sampling is and how you applied it into your study. Explain in detail if any other permissions were sought. Done

State version of SPSS. State name of company and city were CHROMagar strep B is made. State city company for streptex kit used, explain if there are any established prophylactic measures against GBS currently in use in Ethiopia. For results refer to Table in text and explain briefly what it shows and the interesting issues being summarised thereof. Done

Include Odds ratios and confidence intervals in Table 1.

7. page 6-Correct all spelling errors e.g. "ethnic". Separate references cited properly. Explain last sentence of first paragraph epidemiological implications. Cite the CDC 1996 reference. Done

8. page 7-Provide appropriate references for all major statements made e.g. about sexual transmission of GBS. Done

9. page 9-refer to participants not subjects. All notations in listed references must be accurate. Done

10. In the Table heading what does AA and the year written mean? Corrected.

Reviewer: Mercy M Nassali
Reviewer's report:

General comments:

- In regard to sample collection, it is not clarified whether two samples were collected from rectum and lower vagina or it was a single sample. Either method is acceptable though. Temperature at which samples were transported and stored is not specified (room temperature or refrigerated), Time interval from collection to laboratory analysis needs to be clarified too. CDC guidelines 2010 caution on declining recovery of isolates over 1-4 days at elevated temperatures leading to false negatives.

Two samples (one from vagina and one from the rectum) taken for each mother. It was transported at room temperature and immediately (not stored) inoculated on culture media.

They also recommend that if GBS is not identified after incubation for 18–24 hours, then re-incubate plates overnight and examine for suspected GBS colonies overall 48h to minimize false negatives. It was not re-incubated.

Regarding household incomes a reference of Birr to internationally used currency such as USD may guide the reader's understanding of family income. It is corrected.
Major compulsory revisions:

a). Clarify sample collection, storage and laboratory procedures. *It is clarified in this manuscript on the methods section.*

b). Review references for more recent literature all except 2 are before 2000. *Updated*

c). Introduction paragraph 1, review reference, meta analysis has not found GBS to be strongly linked to preterm birth. *We have incorporated suggestion.*

Minor essential revisions

1. Table 1 alignment of results under age 20-35 years

   *Done.*

Comment on consent process and why verbal was preferred. *It is because of low literacy rate in the community and explained in the methods.*