Reviewer’s report

Title: Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices on Schistosomiasis in Sub-Saharan Africa. A systematic Review

Version: 0 Date: 17 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Kate Mitchell

Reviewer’s report:

Major comments:

1. Please make the study aims clearer in the introduction, and make sure they align with the aims given in the abstract. They need to mention the geographical location (sub-Saharan Africa).

2. As per PRISMA guidelines, you should give the full electronic search strategy for at least one database, including any limits used, such that it could be repeated. The search as described does not sound very comprehensive - e.g. 'practices' may not identify all studies measuring relevant behaviour, 'sub-Saharan Africa' alone may not identify all studies from this region.

3. If possible, it would be good to see in the results any differences seen between the different population groups (school-aged children, community, care-givers), and any differences seen between different countries or regions, or changes over time.

4. When you summarise the results across different studies, as well as saying which studies found particular findings (e.g. awareness poor among women), can you also say whether the other studies did not find this if they did look at it (e.g. found no difference in awareness between men and women), or if they did not look at this?

5. Some results are first presented in the Discussion section and should be in the results: p8, lines 218-220 - the adoption of protective behaviour with higher knowledge should be presented in the results - perhaps add a section on association between knowledge, attitudes and behaviour?. Also, p9, lines 246-247 - misconception that schistosomiasis was an STI - should be mentioned in the results.

6. The Discussion should contain a paragraph on limitations - both limitations of individual studies, and limitations of the review.

Minor comments:

1. Include 'systematic review' in the article title
2. In the abstract, include information about the eligibility criteria and how results were synthesised/analysed

3. P4, line 101: 'under-five children' - I would call them 'under-fives' or preschool children.

4. Why did you choose to only include papers published after 2006? Give justification in the methods.

5. In the methods, mention any language restrictions used and any restrictions on article type included (e.g. original research articles, reviews etc.).

6. In the methods, say something about how the data were extracted.

7. Page 5, lines 128-131: description of thematic analysis should be in the methods section, not the results section.

8. Why were studies that did not focus exclusively on schistosomiasis excluded? These might have still contained relevant information.

9. Table 1 should include the year that each study was published and/or conducted.

10. I would recommend putting the section on sociodemographic factors as the last section in the results and the discussion, as it mentions factors specific to the other three sections (knowledge and awareness, attitudes, practices)

11. Not all of the information given in the results is shown in table 1 - e.g. line 146-148, regarding reference 37 and 43 - neither of the entries in table 1 for these studies mentions care giver knowledge and marriage, and neither mentions an association between risky water practices and age. Please check that these are correct and modify the text and/or table accordingly.

12. Can you comment on how 'awareness' was defined in the studies?

13. On page 6, lines 158-161, you mention impact of health education on knowledge, attitudes and practices - I would only talk about knowledge in the section (on knowledge and awareness) and talk about the impact on attitudes and practices in those sections.

14. On page 7, lines 173-174, this is about health seeking behaviour - should be in practices section.

15. Page 8, line 202: "According to [15]" - give the first authors name and et al.

16. Page 10, line 266: "the effect of knowledge" - should this be "the effect of poor knowledge"?

17. Reference 18: Author should be World Health Organization.
18. Figure 1: Records excluded after screening full texts: should give details about why these papers were excluded

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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