Author’s response to reviews

Title: Sero-prevalence and trend of human immunodeficiency virus among blood donors in Ethiopia: A systematic review and meta-analysis.

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Author’s response to reviews:

1) Technical Comments:

1. Title page - Please note that the author list in your manuscript file differ from those entered within the submission system - please correct so they are consistent with each other.

2. Abstract - please rename the sub heading Main body to “Methods”.

Response: -Thank you. Corrected based on the comment

2) Editor comment: The authors developed a well-structured research. However, some details need to be seen before the text can be published

Response: -Thank you and we have incorporated some details on the revised manuscript. For example, we included the result of publication bias assessment with funnel plot (Figure 4) and result of sensitivity analysis (Figure 5).

3) Telma Maria Evangelista Araújo, Ph.D (Reviewer 1):

In the method, I suggest starting by making clear that it is a systematic review with meta-analysis.
Response: -Thank you. We started the method by the following statement based on the comment.” This is a systematic review and meta-analysis conducted to estimate the pooled prevalence of HIV among blood donors in Ethiopia.” (Method section, line 100 on the revised manuscript)

4) In the results in addressing the characteristics of the included studies, they committed grammatical failures by repeatedly repeating between lines 156 and 162 the word "study". So, they should make the text cleaner by avoiding these repetitions.

Response: -Thank you. We tried to re-write the paragraph avoiding repetition of the word” study”. Further, grammatical correction and editing done. (result section, line 154-160 on the revised manuscript)

5) In line 197 of the results, add that there was no statistically significant difference in HIV seropositivity between male and female donors.

Response: Thank you: corrected based on the comment (result section, line 197-198 on the revised manuscript)

6) In the discussion, avoid repetition of results. Thus, I suggest reconstructing the writing of lines 208/209, as follows: "The prevalence of HIV infection found in this study is consistent with findings from similar ones conducted in different countries.”

Response: Thank you: corrected based on the comment. (discussion section, line 208-209 on the revised manuscript)

7) As for the references, although very pertinent and mostly up-to-date, some need to be renovated considering they are 20 years old or older.

Response: Thank you: we tried to update most of the outdated references and we rewrite the paragraphs accordingly. (reference section, line 307-313 on the revised manuscript)

8) Artur Acelino Francisco Luz Nunes Queiroz, Ph.D (Reviewer 2):
Were the same terms used on all bases? For Cinahl, for example, "CINAHL heads" are required, and for PUBMED "MESH". Using the same descriptors for miscellaneous bases may result in loss.

Response: We acknowledge your constructive comment. To search relevant articles, we used different subject-heading for each database. For instance, for Pubmed "MeSH", for CINAHL "CINAHL Headings", for PsycINFO "Descriptors" and for EMBASE "Emtree". In fact, Pubmed alone produced most of the articles found in PsycINFO and other databases.

9) In the section "Data selection and Eligibility" the reasons for inclusion and exclusion must be grouped together.

Response: Thank you. Corrected based on the comment (Method section, line 109-115 on the revised manuscript)

10) Results: The section "Assessment of publication bias" should be on the Methods.

Response: Thank you. we have put how to “assessment of publication” bias in methods section based on your comment. However, in the result the section "Assessment of publication bias" in the result section was the result of publication bias assessment analysis. Now, we have changed the heading “result of publication bias assessment” and make it detail by putting the figure of funnel plot that shows the result of publication bias assessment. We also include the result of sensitivity analysis in figure form for more clarity of the analysis. (method section, line 136-140, result section, line 175-182 on the revised manuscript)

11) Discussion: There is no need to repeat that "This systematic review and meta-analysis".

Response: Thank you. Corrected based on the comment (-discussion section, line 206-207 on the revised manuscript)

12) Page 11, line 250: Is it supposed to be "lack"?

Response: Yes, thank you, it is corrected (-discussion section, line 250 on the revised manuscript)
13) I missed an explanation in the introduction or discussion about the blood screening process at Ethiopia. I believe that this information will help us to better understand the problem.

Response: thank you and we add the following paragraph in the background based on your suggestion. (background section, line 77-84 on the revised manuscript)

14) Conclusion: Just to avoid repeating their method, in our conclusions we should highlight our most important and relevant findings.

Response: unnecessary information avoided and the most important findings are presented ( conclusion section, line 255-261 on the revised manuscript)