**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** Emotional and Behavioral Problems and associated factors among children and adolescents on Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy in public hospitals of West Gojjam zone, Amhara Regional state of Ethiopia, 2018 : a cross sectional study

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 07 Jan 2019

**Reviewer:** Maretha Visser

**Reviewer’s report:**

The paper describes research done to investigate the level of emotional and behavioural problems of children and adolescents with HIV who receive HAART from hospitals in a zone in Ethiopia. The children are assessed using the Paediatric Symptomatology Checklist, a scale that is not standardized for the Ethiopian context. The second aim of the research is to investigate which other variables are linked to emotional and behavioural problems of children and adolescents. The value of the research is that it confirms that children living with HIV have high levels of emotional and behavioural problems. The research identified factors contributing to the problems which can be addressed to assist children and families affected by HIV.

The paper improved since the first version I read. My main concerns are still writing, spelling and formulation - I will highlight a few things I noted but think the journal will have to assist with the language used in the paper. A few concerns and suggestions to improve the paper.

The finding was that children and adolescents experience high level of emotional and behavioural problems. Research in other regions are provided as confirmation of the results. Are these any research done on the emotional and behavioural problems of Ethiopian children in general or on non-HIV infected children in the same region to compare the results with?

In the abstract: reference to "systematic randomly" What does this mean?

Line 56: globally more than ….are living with HIV or have died…

Line 58: adolescence

Line 63-67: reformulate this long sentence so that it makes more sense. Seems you want to say there is a world wide effort to provide sustainable antiretroviral medication to prolong life and to reduce stigma. But a more holistic and comprehensive approach to HIV care and treatment is needed.

Line 72: health factors clearly play a role in emotional and behavioural problems. HIV is an illness that affects emotions and behaviour.

Line 76: engagement in risky behaviour
Line 89: might have significant challenges upon??

Line 93: limited to Addis Ababa

Line 126: parents/caregivers need to give consent for research

Line 133: cut off point of

Line 138: cut off point

Line 136 - WHO self-reporting questionnaire - you need a reference

Line 140-141: part on caregiver consent/assent is repeated here

Line 142: caregivers participated to answer… if the child has difficulty in answering questions…

What would the influence be of caregivers sitting in the interviews and answering some of the questions on the data? This may be added to the limitations of the study.

Line 147: clarify: did not disclose his/her status to him/her

Line 151: statistics

Line 162: respondents were participated in the study? Respondents participated…

How was the family income determined accurately? Seems that family income did not play a role in the emotional and behavioural problems of the children? In other research in SSA socio-economic position played a role!!

Line 168 characteristics

Line 169 more than 6 months

Line 169: 70.1% knew their HIV status

Table 3: acts as if driven by motor - also low frequency (n=3, 0.8%)

Line 210-211: who were not aware … who were aware

Line 218: whose caregivers are their parents - they are not parents in general, but it refers to the child's own parents

Line 220: please give a better description for "less ignorant care"

Line 231-233: please reformulate.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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

No

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.

I recommend additional statistical review

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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