Reviewer's report

Title: Khat use in people living with HIV: a facility-based cross-sectional survey from south west Ethiopia

Version: 3 Date: 1 November 2014

Reviewer: Andargachew Kassa Biratu

Reviewer's report:

Reviewers Note

Your article titled ‘Khat use in people living with HIV: a facility-based cross-sectional survey from south west Ethiopia’ is a topic of wide area research interest specifically on substance use, HIV, and adherence to ART medications. But, I hope that, your article will better be in reached and benefited with review points noted below.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

Title:
1. The Title “People Living with HIV” and its repeated use in a document
   # It needs to be stated in a way that it is ethically sound. Because these clients are not living with HIV but the virus is living within their body

Abstract and Result
1. Line # 36: of abstract and Line # 179 and 180 of Result section:
   # “The overall Prevalence”: This is not specific, is it lifetime or current or past 12 month prevalence?

Introduction:
1. Line # 64: “Khat is a naturally occurring plant”:
   # What does that mean? It is not clear. Needs restatement

2. Line # 90: ….“There is little known about the level of khat use…”
   # it needs restatement

Method:
1. Line # 107: ‘A structured, self-report questionnaire was used to assess the pattern of khat use.”
   # How do you explain the use of self reported questionnaire for those who are “illiterate” or those who can’t read and write?

2. Line # “any amount of khat”:
   # If the participants of the study chewed khat for the sake of testing, these groups
of study participants are considered as chewers. So how could you explain this?

3. Line # 149-151: “However, patients with severe mental illness, those patients whose age was less than 18 years old and persons who were too physically unwell to participate in the study were excluded.”

# What about those who cannot read and write, if not included? How do you explain this?
# Please state your inclusion and exclusion criterions clearly

4. What was the sampling technique used in the study?
# Unless and other ways you consider at least 3 months data collection period you can’t get all the required sampled study participants through Systematic Random Sampling (SRS) technique. Because the minimum follow up period is one month and three months for those stable clients who are on ART and Pre Art. Thus, unless convenience sampling used, it would be impossible to get representative sample of through SRS technique in that specific month (September 2012). Based on its implication on the generalization of the study finding to the whole clients in the Hospital’s Comprehensive HIV/AIDS care outpatient clinic (“ART Clinic”)

5. As there were other similar studies conducted in Ethiopia, why do you prefer to take P=0.5 or (50%). Is this research project part of another research Project? If so better be mentioned clearly.

6. Line # 157-159: “All variables associated with khat use in the bivariate logistic regression with a value of less than 0.25 were entered together into a multivariable logistic regression in order to control for confounding.”
# Why 0.25? Why not 0.2? explain

Conclusion:
1. Conclusion: is your conclusion a generalization to the whole Clients attending the ART client of hospital or only to the study participants? If you used convenient sampling make sure that you only giving conclusion to the sampled study participants.

Tables:
1. The tables 2, 3 and 4 seems to be presented in a single table (optional)

Minor Essential revisions
1. Line # 115 and 188: “World Health Organization (WHO) stage of HIV and WHO clinical stage”
# You better write it as “WHO HIV Clinical Staging” consistently as it is the appropriate name
2. Table 1: You stated that 71(18.3%) and of the study participant were “illiterate”: and 11(2.8) were able to “read and write only”
# If you have such great proportion of study participants who cannot read and
write, how appropriate is using self administered questionnaire?

# Please change the term “illiterate” as it is an ethical and any person may have the chance of getting important knowledge and skill through non formal education. Therefore better to use “Non formal education

3. Line #181-188: This paragraph may not be necessary as it is depicted on the table. Because the most important part is the results of multivariate analysis.

4. Discussion:

# Line# 200-201: “Khat use was associated strongly with other substance misuse and mental distress”
# Needs citation

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests