Reviewer’s report

Title: Self-medication with over the counter drugs, prevalence of risky practice and its associated factors in pharmacy outlets of Asmara, Eritrea

Version: 2 Date: 11 Oct 2018

Reviewer: Jeff Taylor

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for dealing with this reviewer's thoughts. I appreciate the professionalism of your approach.

I fear that in reading your work, I may be moving the goalposts each time for what it will take to be published. I hope that that is not the case. That said, a bit of inertia occurs when seeing a paper several times.

I have suggested to the editors to publish with minor, but essential changes. I will suggest two:

1) In your Methods section, you state knowledge was captured by 10 items. Then, the maximum score is stated as "20". Did you assign 2 points for each correct item? That would help rectify the dissonance a reader will get b/n 10 items and a total score of 20.

Along this same vein of thinking, I have no idea what "taking 15 cumulative score as median" means. My guess is a person who scores a total score of 15 will then be considered to score the median, but obviously this means arranging the scores to arrive at the middle score. Was that decided a priori? Stating that number (Methods) would seem to make more sense in the Results section, where one might state that the median score for knowledge was determined to be 15. Lastly, if you did assign 2 points to each item, then a "15" seems unlikely. The middle score would have to be perhaps a "14", or a "16", but how does one get to 15? I will assume that was via no middle value emerging, so you simply averaged the 14 and 16, which is totally fine of course.

2) You state that a concern over limitations was dealt with. Are you sure? You simply added recall bias. Would not some internal issues be applicable during any attempt to measure Knowledge and Attitude, for example? On line 141 and 142, it is stated that rising raw values reflects a more positive attitude. While that is likely true, as a psychometric measure, can we really be sure the numbers truly reflect that construct? Such aspects are inherent in survey research, one would think.

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

No

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

Unable to assess

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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Acceptable

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None.

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