Author’s response to reviews

Title: Relationship between psychological health and quality of life of people affected by leprosy in the community in Guangdong province, China: a cross-sectional study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Dr Bipin Adhikari,

Thanks for your contributions on our manuscript. As a knowledgeable professor, you have supplied excellent valuable comments to improve this manuscript, and these are benefiting our improvement on expression of viewpoint and language. We have revised the manuscript according your comments, and the language has been promoted by a native English speaker. The comments have been addressed point to point below. A clean version has been included.

Daocheng Zheng

On behalf of all author

Mingzhou and colleagues have made significant revisions based on my and other reviewers’ suggestions. The paper has also improved after being serviced by academic proof reading agency. I think, overall, paper reads well and I have just few comments related to comprehension in addition to update on my previous comment. I would also suggest authors to seek the English editing service’ help for final proof reading after revisions based on my suggestions below.
Introduction

Q1. Line 30 32: The inability…..multibacillary leprosy

This sentence doesn’t make sense here and is not true. It also looks patchy. I suggest remove this sentence.

R: Thanks for your suggestion, we have deleted this sentence in manuscript. See the end of 1st paragraph, background.

Q2. Line 40 to 44: Generally, ……leprosaria

The sentence is unclear. Please remove and paraphrase as follows:

People affected by leprosy also refers to those who have completed the treatment and have got cured. Unlike in past, people who used to live in leprosaria, they live with families and friends in their hometown and work as long as they can execute the work.

R: Thanks for your suggestion, we have revised this sentence as “PAL also refers to those who have completed treatment and have become cured. Unlike in the past when PAL lived in leprosaria, PAL now live with families and friends in their hometown and can work as their physical health allows”. See the 1st sentence of the second paragraph, background.

Q3. Line 44: Chinese government….1949. Are you sure, leprosaria were built only since 1949? Leprosaria existed since long time, even in 1870s in Norway and were ubiquitous. Please check. Also the sentence is unclear. If you are not sure about the data, paraphrase as follows:

In the past, government of China built leprosaria to isolate and shelter leprosy affected persons.

R: Actually, few modern leprosaria have been established in China by clerics from Europe at the end of 19th century. While these leprosaria provided insufficient capacity to cover the demand of all the leprosy patients in China. What’s more, most of these have been destroyed in Anti-Japanese War (1931-1945) and Liberation War (1945-1950) in China. It is not until the establishment of new Chinese government in 1949, that sufficient leprosaria and medical treatments have been offered to all the leprosy patients. However, we supposed that few people were familiar with this history, so we have revised this sentence as that “In the past, the Chinese government built leprosaria to isolate and shelter PAL”. See line 4, 2nd paragraph, background.

Q4. Page 4, line 1: replace none as no
Q5. Page 4, line 37 to 42: What is rigorous social atmosphere?

Paraphrase as follows:

The psychological status and QOL of PAL living in community tend to be lower than in the general population due to prevailing poor attitudes of society towards leprosy (26047512, 24908528) and is generally aggravated by the disability due to leprosy (PMID: 30589875).

R: you have provided an excellent alternative expression for us, and the sentence has been revised your comments, see Page 4, line 37 to 39.

Q6. Line 42 to 44: Leprosy negatively impacts the physical, environmental-how?

Remove the term environmental. I can presume but cannot understand. It adds ambiguity. You might be trying to say the social space of leprosy affected persons, if not that, get rid of that word. It immediately means surrounding environment.

R: Thanks for your reminding, we have removed “environmental” to avoid misunderstanding. See line 7, the last paragraph, background.

Q7. Line 48: The information….research on the PAL. This is not clear. Paraphrase and also change the paragraph as follows:

Currently, the only information about PAL and their status is retained by government leprosy control institutions and are neither publicly available nor are published.

R: Thanks for your suggestion, we have paraphrased this sentence as that "Currently, information about PAL and their status is retained by government leprosy control institutions and are not publicly available", see line 10-12, the last paragraph, background.

Methods

Q8. Line 5 to 6: Please can you cite a reference to say that warm and humid climate is a critical contributing factor for the severe leprosy endemic?
R: Leprosy has been acknowledged as one of the tropical disease, and countries located at tropic and subtropics were contributed most of the patients over the world. We have cited a reference to demonstrate our opinions in manuscript. See line 1-2, 1st paragraph, method.

Q9. Under participant recruitment and questionnaire administration, point no. 2, please paraphrase as follows:

….LEPMIS, the persons were reported to be dead were excluded…..

R: Thanks for your suggestion, we have paraphrased this sentence as that “To account for outdated information in LEPMIS, local public security assisted to identity persons who were no longer living, who were excluded from the study”. See line 4, “Participant recruitment and questionnaire administration” part, method.

Q10. Point no. 5; paraphrase as follows:

The questionnaire was administered after obtaining the written informed consent from participants.

R: Thanks for your suggestion, we have paraphrased this sentence as your comment. See no. 5, “Participant recruitment and questionnaire administration” part, method.

Q11. Line 37…The questions were “shown”, replace to written in Chinese.

R: We have replaced “shown” by “written”, see line 4, the last paragraph of “Participant recruitment and questionnaire administration” part, method.

Q12. Line 52: What is expression disorder? Rephrase it as due to the communication problems or other severe diseases such as mental disorders.

R: We have rephrased this sentence as that “110 were excluded due to communication problems or sickness from other severe diseases”, see line 5, data collection part, method.

Q13. Page 7, line 1: avoid “gathered”

R: We have replaced “gathered” by “sent”, see the last sentence of data collection part, method.
Q14. Line 42: replace “that is why” with therefore.

R: We have replaced “that is why” with “therefore”. See line 19, measurement part, method.

Q15. Line 36 at page 8: instead of reporting as minor participants, report them as participants below the age of….

R: We have revised this sentence to that “all the participants below the age of 18 were provided consent by their parents or legal guardians”, see the last sentence of “Ethics approval and consent to participate” part, method.

Discussion

Q16. Page 12 Line 33 to 40: Moreover……..will be helpful to minimize stigma in a community [32].

It is good to see authors have added some activities of community engagement for stigma reduction. I would request authors to add an additional sentence as follows:

Future stigma reduction strategies also should utilize the elements of community engagement in which community members together with the leprosy affected persons can jointly design a locally tailored stigma reduction interventions for their community (Please see this recently published reference to substantiate your sentence). [32]


R: Thanks for your suggestion, the above mentioned sentences have been added to the manuscript, and the reference has also cited. See the last sentence, 3th paragraph, discussion.