Author’s response to reviews

Title: VITAMIN D STATUS IN HEALTHY BLACK AFRICAN KENYAN ADULTS AT A TERTIARY HOSPITAL IN NAIROBI, KENYA: A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY

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Version: 1 Date: 07 Sep 2018

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Reviewer reports:

Reviewer 1

1. Opening statement on vitamin D being known about for centuries needs to be amended - my understanding was that it was identified in the 20th century.

Action: I have amended this on the Abstract section page 1 line 5.

2. The passage from line 32 should be re-considered as largely observational studies merely implicate vitamin D in these non-skeletal diseases: 'Vitamin D is a prohormone, which is widely known for its role in bone health. (1) Observational studies in the last decade have demonstrated its role in reducing the risk of non-communicable diseases such as cancers, autoimmune diseases, cardiovascular diseases, disorders of glucose metabolism, neurodegenerative diseases and communicable diseases (2)(3)(4)'

Action: This has been amended on background section page 2 line 31.
3. The authors also raise the issue of whether measuring active forms of vitamin D would be of benefit - it would be interesting to have some discussion of this in light of recent literature.

Action: I have quoted a study by Powe et al in 2013, lines 182-186

Reviewer 2: The authors describe the cross sectional study of VD status in health Kenyan and has shown the level of VD deficiency in their study cohort. There is a lack of data of VD level in African population and their data will add additional support to fill this gap. However, authors should consider the following amendment to their manuscript:

1. Conclusion in the abstract is too lengthy and needs shortening.

Action: I think that the conclusion in the abstract section is precise. Kindly advice on may be a specific area that might not be necessary. I have however shortened the conclusion section in the main body of the manuscript line 210-224.

2. There is too much emphasis sating the study subjects "African". In actual fact they can be more specific and say Kenyan instead. It is a big content to be represented with small sample of 253 subjects.

Action: This has been modified to Kenyan adults line 54,210 and 220.

3. Result section 2nd paragraph: overall 62 of the study participants were "male" should be changed to female.

Action: This has been amended on page 6 line 121.
4. Table 3 can be omitted and just being described in the result section.

Action: This has been omitted and a description done line 144 and 145.

5. Discussion- this is an area where they need good revision. For example, paragraph 2 starting with " A few studies of vitamin D…" should be deleted altogether. The author provides an alternative hypothesise of un published study done by Dodie et al. The authors on one hand contradict with the endocrine society cut off level of VD on one hand when their result support the society cut off point

Action: I have revised it. Kindly see the discussion from line 148-196.