Reviewer's report

Title: School workers' knowledge, attitude and behaviour related to use of Toombak: a cross sectional study from Khartoum state, Sudan.

Version: 0 Date: 27 May 2016

Reviewer: Hooman Keshavarz

Reviewer's report:

This cross-sectional study aimed to assess the socio-demographic distribution of ever- and current use of Toombak, knowledge about- and attitudes towards Toombak use and control policy among workers in secondary schools in Khartoum State, Sudan. School workers perception of the inclusion of Toombak use and its health consequences in the school curriculum, and their participation in preventive activities were also examined.

In my opinion, the main shortcoming of this study lies in its data management. Recoding, in most cases, does not seem logical. Unfortunately, flaws in this part affect the results, and make having correct interpretations very difficult.

My comments in detail are as follows:

1. English language editing seems necessary.
2. It is better to have a few words on the background of Toombak in the abstract.
3. "Ever use" and "Current use" should be defined in the methods part of the abstract.
4. The results in the abstract can be shorter, for example by presenting mean age, and rounding reported percentages.
5. Four schools were randomly selected from each of the seven localities, and the probability of random selection was proportional to the size of the strata. Is the number of schools equal in all the seven localities?
6. Did all the school workers of the selected schools accept the invitation to participate in the study? (The response rate should be presented.)
7. There are not any questions on Toombak in the original form of the GSPS questionnaire. Changes made in the original form should be clearly mentioned.
8. According to response options mentioned, recoded age groups should be revised into (< 40) and (≥ 40). (The same revision should be done in related tables.)

9. About the sum variable "knowledge about Toombak": What is the difference between original category 1 (a person who answers correctly only one of the three questions) and original category 3 (a person who answers correctly all the three questions)? Is it justifiable to merge the three original categories into one recoded category "good knowledge"?

10. In 2 out of 7 questions asking about attitudes, the word "tobacco" has been used instead of "Toombak". Is the difference intended?

11. Everywhere a sum score has been presented, a Cronbach's alpha should also be presented for the corresponding questions to show the unidimensionality of the questions.

12. Median goes together with IQR (Mean goes together with SD).

13. Similar to comment 9 but this time about the sum variable "attitude towards Toombak use and control policy": What is the difference between a person who chooses "yes" only in one question out of 7 questions, and a person who chooses "yes" in 5 questions out of 7 questions?

14. About "availability of a policy": recoding does not seem logical. For example, response options "no policy" and "not at all enforced" are clearly different and cannot be merged into one recoded category "no policy".

15. Almost all the findings presented in the first paragraph of the results are a repeat of the findings presented in table 1.

16. Table 1 does not show the results of statistical tests. Why have p-values been mentioned below table 1?

17. In the second paragraph of the results, most findings presented are also a repeat of the findings presented in table 2.

18. Age and gender should be adjusted while the association between ever/current Toombak use and attitudes towards Toombak control is being tested. The second paragraph of the results shows that the association is statistically significant whereas table 6 does not confirm the same result.

19. Almost all the findings presented in the third paragraph of the results are a repeat of the findings presented in table 3.
20. Table 3 shows a significant association between attitudes and gender. So, why is gender absent among predictors in the model presented in table 5?

**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.
Yes

**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.
Not relevant to this manuscript

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