Reviewer’s report

Title: Determinants of Traditional Medicine Utilization for Children: A Parental Level Study in Tole District, Oromia, Ethiopia

Version: 0 Date: 31 Jan 2020

Reviewer: Desiree Jones

Reviewer's report:

BCAM-D-19-01836
Determinants of Traditional Medicine Utilization for Children: A Parental Level Study in Tole District, Oromia, Ethiopia

Reviewer: Desiree Jones, PhD

Reviewer Comments

Summary Comments:

This paper presents an assessment of Traditional Medicine (TM) utilization for children up to 18 years old in the Tole District of Oromia, Ethiopia. The study is essentially a survey based descriptive study with a cross-sectional design; consequently, patterns of use of TM may be understood to some extent with this study, but major conclusions cannot be drawn with respect to recommendations for future TM use in this district, given both the study's design and limited sample size.

The authors have made a good effort with data collection and background information; however, the major limitation of this manuscript is that it lacks the tightness and scientific rigor with which a publication of this nature should be written. Three areas that recurrently are noticeable in this regard are: 1) Repetition of results/data multiple times in the paper; 2) English usage - mixing of past and present tenses; missing verbs in many sentences/other grammatical errors, and 3) Difficulty with the overall coherence of several sentences.

I believe with careful editing and attention to the three areas listed above, the paper can be made more concise, less repetitive, and can better convey the results of this otherwise useful study. In the more detailed comments below, I have stated some specific areas where the paper will benefit from such help. Additionally, it should be thoroughly edited to meet the internationally accepted standards of English use in scientific papers so that it may be presented with greater clarity and consistency for an international audience.

Specific Comments/Areas where manuscript will benefit from suggested changes or additional requested information:

BACKGROUND
Page 2, Line 17 - Remove "a". It should read: painkiller for longer than...
Page 3, Line 7 - It should read: the use of herbs as purgatives and anti-dysentery agents...
Page 3, Line 7 - It should read: Medical textbooks that were written...(not are)
Page 3, Lines 17-18 - Consider saying: The national health system has given less attention to studying the full therapeutic potential of TM or estimating accurately its potential adverse effects.
Page 3, Lines 20-21 - The meaning of the sentence here is not clear. Consider saying: there is considerable diversity and TM use varies significantly between regions.

METHODS

Please consider dividing the section into the more commonly used and accepted sub-headings of Study Participants, Measures/Instruments, and Statistical Analysis

Page 5, Line 6 - Should read: every 12th household was selected (not were)
Page 5, Line 14 - The paper should include a copy of the survey measure, i.e., the instrument used to collect the data, which can be included in supplemental materials. You state the questionnaire was adapted from previous research on similar topics with a citation to reference 4. If the instrument was adapted from a previous study, how was its reliability and validity established? Can the source instrument be shown? These data should be presented - there is too much information missing here.

RESULTS

Results can be summarized significantly simply by referring to relevant Table numbers. Except for salient data, most results do not need to be repeated in the text.

Additionally, it is very important here to define the variables you have used: The reading audience does not know how herbal medicine, bone settler, functional foods, etc. are defined in the context of your study. These terms need clear definitions. How were the parameters
established for these terms? Example: for herbal medicine, CAM use, etc., were the standard NCCIH criteria used? It does not appear so. This needs clarification.

Table 1 (Pages 8-9) shows that only 1 participant relied on health professionals for source of information for TM; the majority used family, relatives, etc. This point is quite salient but has not been discussed at all later in the paper under Discussion/Conclusions.

Page 12, Line 1 - It should read: …and relieve symptoms.
Page 12, Line 7 - It should read: treat illness/relief of symptoms.
Page 14, Table 5: Specify abbreviations below the table. COR, AOR should be specified.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

There is too much repetition of your results in both the Discussion and Conclusion. This whole section needs to be more tight. You have already stated the results in the previous section. Some of the studies you have used for comparison here do not appear relevant or comparable to your sample. For example, the comparison with the Netherlands study. These are not socio-demographically comparable populations. Other studies from Ethiopia you have used provide a more relevant comparison.

You have concluded on the basis of your survey that integration of TM as part of modern medicine should be strengthened. However, it appears from your data that accessibility to modern medicine itself is a need that should also be first met. This has not been discussed. Many issues remain here: You have not established clearly the safety or efficacy of TM. Is TM as practiced actually safe and effective in this sample? The subjective perception of very young parents (in your sample) of children’s health as fair, good, or very good does not constitute an adequate criterion to meet the more objective standard of health.

Further, you have established that traditional medicines are in fact used, but your data show that almost none of your sample gets information regarding TM from health professionals. This raises important issues as to why this is so? Perhaps the wide use of TM has the potential to be augmented, improved, and used with greater support and guidance from health professionals and this study can help suggest some avenues how this may be a direction for the future. There is room for much thoughtful discussion here which the authors should present to bring to full meaning the data presented in this paper.

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

Yes

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.

No

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:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?
2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?
3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?
4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?
5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?
6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal