Dear Editor-in-Chief,

I am writing this cover letter to accompany a manuscript, entitled 'Satisfaction of clients with the services of an outpatient pharmacy at a university hospital in northwestern Ethiopia: a cross-sectional study' conducted by Surur et al, for submission to your esteemed journal BMC Health Services Research to be considered for publication.

The manuscript contained a finding of a study done in the area which is among least investigated, especially using standard validated instruments, areas in health care in Ethiopia and other developing countries.

So the findings reported here could add to the understanding of pharmacy services in our country and possibly other developing countries as seen from clients perspectives which we believe will give the readership of BMC Health Services Research a good insight in to the area.

The manuscript had been submitted to BMC Health Services Research and passed through a peer review process. The result of the review was that it was not possible to consider it for publication as the time for its revision would take longer than standard duration your journal expects it to be completed in. However, a resubmission to the same journal after addressing the concerns raised by reviewers was allowed in the email sent to me as a corresponding author. Based on this, we have revised the manuscript and all the revisions made and answers to points which needed clarification are detailed below.

Based on the idea raised by respected referee 1 that the study should have
included a data across Ethiopia, as the study was not funded we were not able to do that. In addition similar study done and cited in the manuscript covered a number of hospitals in the capital city Addis Ababa. One of the recommendations of this cited study was to do the research in different parts of the country to add to it and substantiate the existing evidence. The present study represents the effort of getting the picture of the situation in a hospital in the northwest part of the country.

Based on the comments from respected referee 1 we have added more information in the background part about the need to assess satisfaction level of clients with pharmacy services generally and in particular in Ethiopia. Studies done in different countries on the topic were also added based on comments given by the same referee. In addition the current status of pharmacy practice in Ethiopia, the functions of pharmacists and the situation of pharmaceutical care in the country are also added to the introduction part of the manuscript.

In the methodology part, based on comments from respected referee 1, we have added more information about the hospital in which the study was done. In addition the selection procedure used in including clients in the study and the interview process are detailed.

As to the questions raised by respected referee 1 in relation to why SPSS version 16 and why ethical clearance was not sought from the hospital itself, the version of SPSS we had available at the time the data was collected was the version 16, that was the reason we used it to analyze the data. The ethical clearance was gained from the school of pharmacy already and we didn't need additional clearance steps from the hospital as the hospital was under the university.

In the result part, based on the comment from respected referee 1 we have made the calculation of response rate clearer. In the same part by taking the comments from the same referee we have corrected the presentation of t test and ANOVA. In addition some tables were deleted.

In the discussion section based on the points mentioned by the same referee, we have added to the depth of discussion and explanation of differences with other countries. In addition findings from other African countries have also been added for comparison. The repetition of results in discussion part has also been avoided.

Limitation which was pointed out by respected referee 1 has been added.

In the abstract section based on the comments from the same referee the background part was expanded while the result section was made clearer and shorter.
In relation to the question raised by respected reviewer 2 as to the importance of the study, we believe that the study needed to be conducted because the previous studies have not specifically dealt with pharmacy services except for one study cited in the manuscript. As it needs specific emphasis to understand the issue clients satisfaction study needed to be conducted in the hospital.

Based on the comment from respected reviewer 2 the objective and sample size determination methods have been clarified.

In the method part based on the comments given by respected reviewer 2, meanings of levels of satisfaction and their measurement is detailed. Also, by taking the suggestion from the reviewer the levels of satisfaction were described by the terms very low, low, moderate, high and very high as the levels used previously were meant to provide the same interpretation. As per the comment of the same reviewer the dependent variable was considered a latent variable. In the method part revisions were made on the calculation method of sample size basing on the comments from respected reviewer 2.

As to the reliability of the instrument used in this study, the exact instrument employed by the cited study was used. So the reliability of the scale has been reported as per the suggestion of respected reviewer 2.

Explanation of the way mean score of satisfaction was calculated, was moved from results part to the methodology part as commented by the same reviewer.

Testing of the difference in the mean level of satisfaction among different socio-demographic groups was done but not mentioned in the objective, so it was corrected by modifying the statement of the objective.

Based on the comments given about the t-test and ANOVA, the tests were modified to be on the overall mean values of satisfaction among different socio-demographic groups. In addition for the ANOVA post hoc tests have also been included based on comments from respected reviewer 2.

The sample size and response rate calculation error, which was due to typing error, has been corrected based on the comment.

Detailed information on sampling technique has also been added based on comments by respected reviewer 2 to clarify the procedure. Signs used in the sample size calculation formula have also been described better based on the comment about them.
Spelling errors and missed terms have also been corrected.

Discussion component of the manuscript has been strengthened with more comparisons and interpretation of findings. Limitation of the study has been added after the discussion part.

The abstract part has also been modified based on the changes made in the manuscript body.

By incorporating the necessary changes based on the invaluable comments of the reviewers of the manuscript, we are submitting our manuscript as a new submission to your esteemed journal.

All the authors of this manuscript have seen and have agreed that it be submitted to BMC Health Services Research.

All correspondence regarding this manuscript can be addressed to:

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We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Fitsum Sebsibe Teni