Reviewer’s report

Title: Challenges faced by caregivers of virally non-suppressed children on the intensive adherence counselling program in Uganda. A qualitative study

Version: 0 Date: 21 Dec 2018

Reviewer: Khatijah Abdullah

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for an interesting paper. Overall the study methodology is well described. However the results and the tables /figures need to be revised to ensure consistency

The paper suggested that there will be two main questions: one on the challenges and and another on what caregivers like to have improvements on.

Three major themes were reported in the abstract: 1) Health system reforms; the caregivers called for clinic times outside of school hours, reduction in stock outs of paediatric ART regimens and improved quality of counselling. 2) Psycho social support; they requested for support for disclosure to their children and families, more frequent peer support groups and parenting classes. 3) Economic empowerment; Lack of money was a major stumbling block and requested to be trained in vocational skills, help with school fees and support to start up income generating activities to make some money to support the children.

However the results were not consistent as in the text it were different:

1. In the text Five major themes were cited to have emerged as the challenges to improvement in adherence (figure 1). There were no sub themes in the figure although it was included in the text Quotes were included to support the sub themes - however there was no information whether it was elicited from biological mothers/relatives/siblings which would have given the contextual explanations to it

2. There were three more themes cited in the text for Support that the caregivers would like to receive in order to help the children suppress their HIV viral load (Figure II) which did not have any illustrative quotes to support the three themes. Relevant quotes need to be included to provide the support for the themes identification
3. It was mentioned that a guide with open ended questions and an allowance for probing questions, was used to moderate the discussion and that this guide had four thematic areas that explored the challenges caregivers faced - please include details about the interview guide questions to ensure its relevancy and comprehensiveness.

4. It was mentioned that Five FGDS were held although saturation of data was achieved after four FGDs How was data saturation ensured?

5. Discussion was only focusing on what was reported in the literature. It could be improved with discussing it against the societal, cultural and economical situation.

6. It was noted that there was a 15-25 years old category - how was the consent taken for those below 18?

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.

No

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published
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