Author’s response to reviews

Title: Patterns of Illness Disclosure among Indian Slum-Dwellers: A Qualitative Study

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Version: 2 Date: 04 Oct 2017

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(Manuscript ID: IHHR-D-17-00007)

Dear Handling Editor,

We are very much thankful to the reviewers and the editor for their deep and thorough review. We have once again revised our present research paper in the light of their useful suggestions and comments. I hope our revision has improved the paper to a level of their satisfaction. Number wise answers to their specific comments/suggestions/queries are as follows.

Editor’s Comment:

Comment 1: There are a few language errors and we would like to request you check your text to correct any of these.
Response: Thank you for your remarks. We have thoroughly screened the paper and indeed found more than a few mistakes. We have now corrected them via multiple rounds of reviews and are now confident that grammar and language are sound.

Comment 2: Many thanks for the additional information about the lack of formal ethical approval for your work. We would like to ask for a letter confirming a lack of formal ethics committee from the Indian research institute (ISEC) for our records. We would also like to request that you reduce the length of your 'Ethics approval and consent to participate' section to merely clarify why formal ethical approval was not required and the consent obtained.

Response: We have requested the statement to ISEC and we include it along with the revised article. In particular, ISEC members have expanded on the request by pointing how the work in this paper has been presented to the institution and screened several times for ethical issues. They state that all parts of the presented research are considered in line with the ethical requirements.

In view of that, we have amended the ‘ethical approval and consent to participate’, which is now significantly shorter and reads as follows (pg. 36):

Because of the non-clinical and non-invasive nature of the study, the study has thoroughly followed the ethical guidelines for social science research in health framed by National Committee For Ethics In Social Science Research In Health (NCESSRH) [36,37,]. This study also did not require approval by the Medical Research and Ethics Committee according to the Dutch Medical Research (Human Subjects) Act [58]. Oral consent to participate was obtained from all the participants. The Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) has followed the study throughout and guaranteed for the ethical suitability of the adopted methods in the local Indian context.