

August 08, 2014

Dear Editor,



Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: ESPS edited 12372.doc).

**Title:** The Problem of Hepatocellular Carcinoma in West Africa

**Author:** Nimzing G. Ladep, Olufunmilayo A. Lesi, Pantong Mark, Maud Lemoine, Charles Onyekwere, Mary Afihene, Mary M.E. Crossey, Simon D. Taylor-Robinson

**Name of Journal:** *World Journal of Hepatology*

**ESPS Manuscript NO:**12372

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

1 Format has been updated

2 Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewer

(1) **Reviewer: 00012051**

**Comments:** *The paper entitled "The problem of HCC in West Africa" by N Ladep et al deals with a crucial topic in this area of the world. It is having the merit to try covering a large spectrum of aspects of the problem. The weakest paragraph concerns AFB1 exposure. It may be completed since it is a major concern in particular it is important to go more into detail on the synergistic effect of AFB1 and HBV and underline that only a parallel effort to reduce both risks factors may reduce HCC in West Africa. The authors may check the references accuracy for ex on page 8 about transgenic mice exposed to AFB1 the ref 22 is not related to this specific point...*

**Response:** The error in the reference is regretted and has been appropriately corrected. We have also cross-checked the other references to the best of our ability. As this article aimed to highlight the diverse issues related to HCC in West Africa, we tried our best to apportion sections that dealt with the main issues. Every attempt has been made to discuss the synergism between HBV and aflatoxin in both the introduction and the conclusion/recommendation.

(2) **Reviewer: 00058388**

**Comments:** *This is a very well-written review on a largely neglected but important issue for the whole sub-Saharan Africa. This manuscript deserves to be published in an international journal as WJH.*

**Response:** We appreciate the supportive comments from this reviewer and hope that our work would provide a platform for more interest in the problem of hepatocellular carcinoma in West Africa.

(3) *Reviewer: 00068250*

**Comments:** 1 This is an interesting topic. The following points are provided for its improvement. 2 The sentence in the Conclusion section "Burden of HCC in the West Africa is likely to increase in the next 40-50 years" is too pessimistic. Foreseeing things after half an century is extremely difficult. Conditions will be improved alongside the economic development and social progression. 3 A section of overview or introduction is suggested at the beginning of the article to present the brief research in HCC in the West Africa. 4 A table is suggested to illustrate the features of HCC in the West Africa especially in difference from other areas of the world. 5 In the Conclusion section, what the problem is should be presented and also the attempt to the solution. 6 Table 1 should be balanced to include both men and women.

**Response:** The quoted conclusion section was a view of some other researchers and not our own. This was appropriately referenced. However, we have rephrased that section of the conclusion to, "In view of the multifactorial aetiological factors in the causation of HCC and the fact that not so much is in place regarding coordinated control of some of the these risk factors, some authors have predicted that the burden of HCC in West Africa is likely to increase in the next 40-50 years[52]. However, this sounds rather pessimistic and suggests that control efforts would not be in place." A section "Introduction" was added to the manuscript as suggested. An additional table (Table 2) was included in the revised version of the manuscript- Differences between risk factors, clinical features, surveillance and management of hepatocellular carcinoma in developed countries compared to West African countries. Some recommendations were included and table 1 was edited as suggested by the reviewer.

3 References and typesetting were corrected

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Hepatology*.

Sincerely yours,

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