



# Paulina Ackley Akpan-Idiok

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The Science Editor  
Baishideng Publishing Group Inc  
Pleasanton, CA 94566, USA.

Dear Sir,

**Re: POINT-BY-POINT RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS' COMMENTS ON MANUSCRIPT NO. 57239 - ASSESSMENT OF BURDEN AND COPING STRATEGIES AMONG CAREGIVERS OF CANCER PATIENTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.**

The authors do hereby appreciate the reviewers for their specific comments to the above named submitted and accepted manuscript for publication in your journal. The Table below provides point – by – point answers to all reviewers' comments:

S/N	Reviewers Comments	Authors Response
1.	<p>The aim of this study was to determine the burden experiences and coping strategies among caregivers of advanced cancer patients attending a university teaching hospital in Nigeria. The authors have used a survey research methodology for this cross-sectional study. In terms of the survey content, the authors have used two survey instruments, namely the modified ZBI scale and the modified Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced (COPE) Inventory. The modified ZBI scale is a validated tool, with an acceptable inter-item reliability and convergent validity indicated by a Cronbach alpha of 0.79 and a correlation coefficient of 0.71 between caregiver global evaluation and scores was reported as well as a test-retest reliability of 0.71 and internal consistency (Cronbach alpha = 0.91). Similarly, the modified COPE inventory is also well known and widely used.</p> <p>In terms of the sample size, the authors have also reported that since the true population size is unknown, they have done a power analysis calculation to estimate the required sample size to conduct their study. The results show that close to 82 %experience moderate or severe burden (46% experiencing severe degree burden, and 36% having moderate degree of burden). Various different coping strategies such as acceptance, reprioritization, appreciation, and family, positive self-view and empathy were used by the caregivers. The study shows that numerous characteristics such as that age, sex, educational status, functional ability, duration of care and desire to continue caregiving were statistically significantly associated with caregivers' coping strategies.</p>	<p>The authors appreciate the specific comments made by the reviewers in terms of study aim, which was to determine the burden experiences and coping strategies among caregivers of advanced cancer patients attending a university teaching hospital in Nigeria.</p>

2.	<p>I think this is a very good study with very important results. Although the study results are not novel, they reiterate the importance of looking after the mental and emotional health of the caregivers. I would urge the authors to evaluate if there was any association between the type of cancer in the patients that the caregivers were taking care of and the degree of burden and coping strategies used by the caregiver.</p>	<p>We agree and welcomed the idea of integrating the association between the type of cancer in the patients that the caregivers were taking care of and the degree of burden and coping strategies used by the caregiver in the study.</p> <p>Based on the reviewers' comments, we have included our results in Tables 8 and 9, which shows the test of association between type of cancer and caregivers' perceived burden level and coping strategies.</p> <p>The results presented in Table 8 shows that types of cancer were statistically significantly associated with caregivers' burden level (<math>\chi^2=59.01</math>; <math>p=.000</math>). It was further observed that caregivers experience severe burden mostly during caregiving of prostate 44 (72.1%) and colorectal cancer patients 9 (60.0%) while moderate burden was higher for those with breast cancer 44 (62.8%) and cervical cancer 15 (34.8%). No burden was mostly reported for those with HIV related cancers 5 (62.5%).</p> <p>The results presented in Table 9 shows that types of cancer were statistically not significantly associated with caregivers' coping strategies (<math>\chi^2=7.00</math>; <math>p=.320</math>). It was further observed that caregivers coping strategies showed more effectiveness for patients with breast cancer, Hodgkin's lymphoma and HIV related cancer than other types of cancer.</p>
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We hope that our response above has addressed the reviewers' comments.

Yours faithfully,



**Paulina Ackley**