

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Virology

Manuscript NO: 60564

Title: Epidemiological characterization and geographic distribution of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome infection in Northern African countries

Reviewer's code: 00506601

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: PhD

Professional title: Doctor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: United States

Author's Country/Territory: Libya

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Reviewer chosen by: Pan Huang

Reviewer accepted review: 2020-12-01 13:01

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Review time: 5 Hours

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Re-review	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Peer-reviewer	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous

statements

Conflicts-of-Interest: [] Yes [Y] No

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Review for World Journal of Virology (MS #60564) : Epidemiological Characterization and Geographic Distribution of HIV/AIDS infection in Northers Africa. This is a meta-analysis of published reports on the prevalence/incidence of HIV/AIDS in Northern Africa. There seems to be a significant lack of data since of the 721 reports only 41 met the criteria of scientifically useful data for the meta-analysis. Though the paper at times was hard to read since the authors are not native English speakers, I think given the dearth of reliable data in the region of the world this is a good first look. Content specific comments: Abstract: In the Conclusion the authors mention that HIV is an emerging threat in North Africa. Given that the virus emerged 40 years ago in Africa that term does not seem appropriate. I might use the word “increasing” threat to more accurately describe the data presented. This is supported by the Background on the next page where the authors say that Africa has been a severely affected geographical area with over 70% of the world population living with HIV. On the bottom of page 6 there is an English translation problem where the authors say that risky behavior was not well indulged by society. I have no idea what they mean. Please fix! Methods are well devised and described. Results: Page 14 More translation problems that make reading this section difficult. Under Demographic features, second sentence I think the statement “Within the HIV/AIDS cases reported the better word is Among the HIV/AIDS cases. I would re-write this sentence to say: Among the HIV/AIDS cases reported the prevalence of infection was highest among the age 21-30 age group (45%) compared to 31-40 year age group (30%) , 95% CI should be used so the reader can see if this difference is statistically significant. Page 15 and throughout the paper, please define the acronyms. I don’t know what PWID stands for and had to guess what the other



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acronyms meant. Five lines down from the Prevalence section the authors say: "HIV/AIDS among sexual promiscuity was..." How is this defined? This is a behavior that needs to be defined not a group! Page 17: Geospatial distribution, first sentence. The authors state that HIV/AIDS spread gradually from coastal sites to other regions. Figure 7 does not separate 2008 from 2017 so what is the data behind this statement? Page 18, last line of the first paragraph. The sentence structure is confusing. I think you meant to say: "No data was available on most Eastern and Western Sahara regions". Next sentence, please define what you mean by high-risk clustering. An English speaker needs to look at the syntax for this page because it is awkward. Page 20, second paragraph 5 lines down. "Northeastern Algeria reported as high". High compared to what? And do you mean significantly higher? Discussion: What do you mean by HIV infection patterns in North Africa countries was subjected to debate and perturbation? Also 4th line down what do you mean by judgmental. This sentence is so vague. The rest of the Discussion needs to be edited by an English speaker.