

Responses

Responses to Reviewers' Comments:

Reviewer #1:

Scientific Quality: Grade C (Good)

Language Quality: Grade C (A great deal of language polishing)

Conclusion: Minor revision

Specific Comments to Authors: In this manuscript, authors reported that gastric cancer incidence trend from 1979 to 2016 in Taiwan. The annual percent changes showed decreasing rates of gastric cancer in both males and females. It is a meaningful research. While some problems are as follows:

We really appreciate and thank for the reviewer's valuable comments. Below are our point-by-point responses.

- 1) The authors should subdivide the pathological types of gastric cancer and further research trends of the incidence of gastric cancer from different original cells

Response #1-1): Thanks for the reviewer's important highlight. Indeed, this is the limitation arising from lack of pathological data of individual subjects of databases used in our study. Therefore, we add discussion about this issue with related information from reference 35 and 11 in the last paragraph of our discussion, "First, due to limitations of the database, we are unable to confirm whether the declines in gastric cancer incidence are attributed to differential histologic types and anatomic sites. An earlier study showed a decreased SIR of non-cardia gastric cancer after *H. pylori* eradication, but this eradication did not influence the overall risk for cardia gastric cancer [35]. Also, as for pathological patterns, another study in Taiwan showed significantly decreasing trends in the incidence of adenocarcinoma. However, there was no evident decrease in the incidences of mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue lymphoma and diffuse large B-cell lymphoma [11]. Therefore, further studies are needed to investigate the relationship between *H. pylori* and the histologic type and anatomic site of gastric cancer."

- 2) The manuscript exists some spelling mistakes and some unsuitable typeface formats, such as "H" of *H. pylori* should be in italic in Page 4-5.

Response #1-2): Thanks for the reviewer's notification .We have revised the manuscript accordingly.

Reviewer #2:

Scientific Quality: Grade A (Excellent)

Language Quality: Grade A (Priority publishing)

Conclusion: Minor revision

Specific Comments to Authors: This is an interesting population and epidemiology study. It provides some data on gastric cancer incidence in Taiwan. Only a minor comment for Ref 1, please use the most recent GLOBOCAN statistic.

We really appreciate and thank for the reviewer's valuable comments and suggestion. Response #2): We have revised the introduction with the 2020 GLOBOCAN statistic, "Gastric cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer death worldwide. Data from GLOBOCAN 2020 shows an age-standardized incidence rate of gastric cancer of 15.8 per 100,000 persons for males and 7.0 per 100,000 persons for females, with a mortality rate of 11.0 per 100,000 persons in males and 4.9 per 100,000 persons in females^[1]."

REFERENCES 1

Ferlay J, Ervik M, Lam F, Colombet M, Mery L, Pineros M, Znaor A, Soerjomataram I, Bray F. Global Cancer Observatory: Cancer Today. Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer, 2020

Reviewer #3:

Scientific Quality: Grade C (Good)

Language Quality: Grade B (Minor language polishing)

Conclusion: Major revision

Specific Comments to Authors: -

We really appreciate and thank for the reviewer's valuable comments. Below are our point-by-point responses.

The abstract should be revised; The abstract should contain 250 words and also the conclusion is not very interesting.

Response #3-1): Thanks for the reviewer's comments and suggestions. We have revised the abstract to meet the requirement of word number limitation within 250. Also, we have revised the conclusion accordingly, including highlights with the factors of gender, age, and national anti-*Helicobacter pylori* treatment.

- Keyword was not sufficient.

Response #3-2): Thanks for the reviewer's comments and suggestions. We have added keywords, including Gastric cancer; Population-based study; Taiwan Cancer Registry ; Sex difference; *Helicobacter pylori*; *H. pylori* eradication, six words in total.

- Core tip need to be substantially revised to cover main findings of the manuscript; particularly the authors was not evaluated - the impact of lifestyle modification or screening programs for gastric cancer in the results; therefore, I suggested that delete this items.

Response #3-3): Thanks for the reviewer's comments and suggestions. We admitted and revised the core tip accordingly as the following: "Gastric cancer remains a

leading cause of cancer death worldwide. In this population-based study, we used the national Taiwan Cancer Registry database to evaluate secular trends in gastric cancer in Taiwan. Annual percent changes (APC) showed continuously decreasing rates of gastric cancer in both males and females, with an APC of -2.58% in males, and -2.14% in females. Age-specific incidence rates increased with age. Within the same age group, the sex ratio was lower in later birth cohorts than in early birth cohorts. Age-adjusted incidence rates substantially decreased with the increase in patients newly treated with anti-*H. pylori* treatment.”

- what is "different factors" in the line 16, page 5? Please clearly state the purpose of the study.

Response #3-4): Thanks for the reviewer’s comments and suggestions. We have modified the last sentence of introduction section, “This study aimed to investigate secular trends in the incidence of gastric cancer and its association with *H. pylori* eradication programs in Taiwan.”

- In my opinion, the results are not written according to the standard style; Please revised this section and include the figure numbers in parentheses. - Images 2-5 re-edited; Some sentences are written in reverse; In addition, the figure legends was not sufficiency. Figure legends should support your figure entirely, meaning that the reader of your paper should be able to understand your figure by the figure legends.

Response #3-5): Thanks for the reviewer’s comments and suggestions. We have revised the results and modified the legends of all five figures, for example, ‘‘Figure 2. Age-specific incidence rates of gastric cancer in Taiwan by time period during 1981-2015 among (A) males, and (B) females, showing lower incidence rates in more recent time periods than in earlier time periods. The decreasing trend was more evident in males than in females,’’ and “Figure 3. Age-specific incidence rates of gastric cancer in Taiwan by birth cohort during 1906-2005 among (A) males, and (B) females, showing higher incidence rates in older birth cohorts than in younger birth cohorts within the same age group. Within the same birth cohort, incidence rates increased by age more evidently in males than in females.”

Responses to Editorial Office’s Comments

Science editor:

1 Scientific quality:

The manuscript describes an observational study of the secular decreasing trends in gastric cancer in Taiwan. The topic is within the scope of the WJG. (1) Classification: Grade C, Grade A and Grade C; (2) Summary of the Peer-Review Report: The authors found an interesting population and epidemiology study. It provides some data on gastric cancer incidence in Taiwan.

However, the questions raised by the reviewers should be answered; and (3) Format: There are 5 figures. (4) References: A total of 34 references are cited, including 4 references published in the last 3 years;

(5) Self-cited references: There are 2 self-cited references. The self-referencing rates should be less than 10%. Please keep the reasonable self-citations that are closely related to the topic of the manuscript, and remove other improper self-citations. If the authors fail to address the critical issue of self-citation, the editing process of this manuscript will be terminated;

Response: Thanks for the editor's reminding on the issue of self-cited references, i.e., reference 6 and 22 in the original manuscript. Accordingly, we have replaced the previous reference 6 with "**Ministry of Health and Welfare. Cancer Registry Annual Report, 2016. In: Health Promotion Administration, editor. Taiwan, Republic of China, 2016.**" Also, we replace the previous reference 22 with another article "**Scherubl H. Alcohol Use and Gastrointestinal Cancer Risk. *Visc Med* 2020; **36**(3): 175-181.**"

and (6) References recommend: The authors have the right to refuse to cite improper references recommended by peer reviewer(s), especially the references published by the peer reviewer(s) themselves. If the authors found the peer reviewer(s) request the authors to cite improper references published by themselves, please send the peer reviewer's ID number to the editorialoffice@wjgnet.com. The Editorial Office will close and remove the peer reviewer from the F6Publishing system immediately.

Response: Thanks for the editor's reminding on the issue of reference recommendation. Regarding to the reviewer #2's recommendation, we think the recommendation is important and reasonable to use the GLOBOCAN 2020 estimates of cancer incidence produced by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. We appreciate the reviewer #2's valuable suggestion.

2 Language evaluation:

Classification: Grade C, Grade A and Grade B. A language editing certificate issued by LLC was provided.

3 Academic norms and rules:

The authors provided the Biostatistics Review Certificate, the STROBE Statement, and the Institutional Review Board Approval Form. Written informed consent was waived. No academic misconduct was found in the Bing search.

4 Supplementary comments: This is an unsolicited manuscript. No financial support was obtained for the study. The topic has not previously been published in the WJG.

5 Issues raised:

(1) The language classification is Grade C. Please visit the following website for the professional English language editing companies we recommend: <https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/gerinfo/240>;

Response: Thanks for the editor's suggestions. We have sent the manuscript to professional English language editing companies and did the complete language editing. The English editing certificate is also attached.

(2) The title is too long, and it should be no more than 18 words;

Response: Thanks for the editor's question. The current title "Secular Decreasing Trends in Gastric Cancer in Taiwan – A Population-Based Cancer Registry Study" is 13 words in total.

(3) The authors did not provide original pictures. Please provide the original figure documents. Please prepare and arrange the figures using PowerPoint to ensure that all graphs or arrows or text portions can be reprocessed by the editor;

Response: Thanks for the editor's reminders. The original figures have been prepared and attached with the format of PowerPoint.

(4) PMID and DOI numbers are missing in the reference list. Please provide the PubMed numbers and DOI citation numbers to the reference list and list all authors of the references. Please revise throughout;

Response: Thanks for the editor's reminders. We have revised the reference list throughout, except for the reference 14, 15, 26, and 32 due to no DOI citation numbers.

and (5) The "Article Highlights" section is missing. Please add the "Article Highlights" section at the end of the main text.

Response: Thanks for the editor's reminders. We have added Article Highlights below conclusion section at the end of the main text, following the format in the Guidelines and Requirements.