

Health-seeking behaviour of stroke patients in a rural area of BangladeshAlam MB et al. (mashreky@ciprb.org)

Reviewer's information			
Date review assigned	11-May-23	Date review returned	16-Apr-23
Reviewer name	Dr. Mohammad Moniruzzaman	Affiliation	National Institutes of Health
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Do you have any conflict of interest with the author/s?	No	Do you wish to be disclosed to the author?	No

Reviewer's comments [Please select "Yes" or "No"]		Author's response [Please write a response if the reviewer's comment is "No". You must change the manuscript as per your response. Mention line numbers.]	
1. Is the title appropriate?	Yes	-	
2. Is the research question or study objective clearly defined in measurable terms?	Yes	-	
3. Is the abstract accurate, balanced and complete?	No	Modified and text added in L49, 55,56,57,70,71,72	
4. Is the study design appropriate to answer the research question or achieve objective?	Yes	-	
5. Are the Methods described sufficiently to allow others to repeat it?	No	Modified and text inserted Line 125-129	
6. Are the operational definitions and ascertainment of key variables given adequately?	No	Explained in line 178 & 179	
7. Are the outcomes clearly defined?	No	Text added in the analysis section	
8. Are statistics used appropriately and described fully?	No	Analysis section modified	
9. Do the Results address the research question or objective clearly?	Yes	-	
10. Are the tables and figures clear and appropriate to address the objective or research question?	Yes	-	
11. Does the Discussion cover the main points of the paper?	No	Discussion section modified	
12. Are the strengths and limitations addressed?	Yes	-	
13. Are the conclusions justified by the results	Yes	-	
14. Are the references up-to-date, and appropriate?	No		
15. Is the standard of written English acceptable for publication?	No	Tried to fixed the text considering language	
16. Descriptive comments to the authors (Divide it into MAJOR and MINOR points).		Respond and reflect it in your manuscript. If you refute, justify your argument using references. Mention line numbers.	
MAJOR points Abstract			
1. In background, it will be better to add a statement of why this study was conducted (knowledge gap) at the beginning.		1. Following text have been inserted. Background: Improper health-seeking behaviors (HSB) have been correlated with detrimental health outcomes, elevated rates of illness and mortality.	
2. In Methods: Please include the number of individual screened, households, suspected stroke cases, and stroke patients (confirmed cases) for interviews. Please mention the age of the eligible participants.		2. Method: Out of the 419 suspected cases identified during the screening process, 186 cases were officially reported after undergoing a confirmed diagnosis.	

<p>3. Please mention the name of the tool used for health-seeking behavior, if any.</p> <p>4. Please mention whether Neurologists were certified by any legitimate regulatory body. If so, you can say “Certified Neurologist,” in the abstract but mention the name of a regulatory body in the main text.</p> <p>5. In results: please specify these terms: unregistered care providers (who are they, are they qualified but not registered or something else such as non-physicians, not-medically trained, quack etc.?) and treatment outside of a hospital setting. Lines 65 –68, please simplify and uniform the statements.</p> <p>6. Conclusion: Please rewrite in plain language (avoiding epidemiological terms such as proportion).</p>	<p>3. Mentioned in methods section.</p> <p>4. We preferred to keep “Neurologist”.</p> <p>5. Result : such as village doctors, health assistants, and kabirajs, who do not possess registration from the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council.</p> <p>6. Conclusion: A notable proportion of stroke patients in rural Bangladesh sought treatment from unqualified service providers. Health-seeking behavior was found to be associated with factors such as gender, education, and economic condition.</p>
<p>Main text</p> <p>7. Introduction mostly focused on general information on health-seeking behavior and consequences of stroke events. Instead, authors should describe how health-seeking behavior may affect the treatment outcome or prognosis of stroke patients and why health-seeking behavior is important to consider. Authors should also discuss the location context; health-seeking behavior of stroke patients in Bangladesh. Please discuss the findings of previous studies in Bangladesh and how this study adds to existing knowledge. Please expand this section.</p> <p>8. Methods: Lines 121 –122, please mention the number of confirmed case/analytical sample size and briefly describe the health-seeking behavior questionnaires. Who conducted the health-seeking behavior interviews, and how many questions were asked This is the main outcome of the study. So, authors should sufficiently discuss what aspects of health-seeking behaviors or questions were inquired. Please specify all terms used with examples (see earlier comments).</p> <p>9. L 128 –129: this statement does not fit here: “The selection of a healthcare provider is considered an important indicator in determining healthcare patterns.” Please remove it from here.</p> <p>10. L135 –136: Please describe how the variables, particularly education and income, were categorized for bivariate analysis.</p>	<p>7. Introduction : Inappropriate health-seeking behaviors (HSB) have been linked to negative health outcomes, increased rates of illness and death, and inferior health statistics.⁴</p> <p>8. Methods: The final diagnosis has officially confirmed a total of 186 cases of stroke. All the neurologists involved in this study were academic faculty members at the National Institute of Neuroscience in Bangladesh. They obtained their academic degrees from the Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons.</p> <p>9. Deleted as reviewer suggested.</p> <p>10. Gender, education and income was considered independent variable and while the choice of health provider was considered the dependent variable. Education was categorized into two groups: literate and illiterate. Income was categorized as either 5000 or less, or more than 5000. Gender was classified into male and female categories.</p>
<p>Results</p> <p>11. Table 1 and Table 2: Please add sample size in the title. In Table 1, please add other background characteristics such marital status, education, income etc. Please add the mean age (SD).</p>	<p>11. Table modified as suggested.</p>

<p>12. In Table 2, Please add footnotes for the responses to clarify the terms such “non-registered”, “Non in hospital” etc.</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>13. It will be better to summarize the key findings of this study in plain language in the first paragraph.</p> <p>14. Please move the limitations and strengths (L 198 – 204) at the end of discussion or before the conclusion section.</p> <p>15. There are many repetition of results in the discussion section. Please avoid the repetition of results. Instead, discuss how the findings are justified—compare the findings with findings of relevant studies done in neighboring countries, which is lack in the current discussion.</p> <p>16. Conclusion: please see the earlier comment.</p> <p>17. Other: It would better to edit the English language.</p> <p>MINOR points</p> <p>18. Title can be changed to “Health-Seeking Behavior of Stroke Patients Residing in a Rural Area in Bangladesh.”</p>		<p>12. Modified accordingly.</p> <p>13. Modified.</p> <p>14. Tried to improve the language.</p> <p>15. Attempted to enhance the quality of the language.</p> <p>16. Revised.</p> <p>17. Tried to improve English language.</p> <p>18. Revised the title accordingly.</p>
<p>17. Reviewer’s Recommendation</p>	<p>Major revision</p>	

<p>Executive Editor’s comments</p>	<p>Author’s response Please respond to all comments from the editor and reviewer(s). Indicate the line number(s) of the manuscript where the changes are done.</p>
<p>This is a good manuscript on Bangladesh's important public health issue. It is well-written. However, adding a little more clarity would be excellent.</p> <p>1. Methods: Could you provide more information on the diagnostic criteria? This is pertinent to those readers not conversant on the VSFS.</p> <p>2. Methods: How valid is your income data? The income of rural households comes from various sources. Some of those sources are not immediately calculable. Dozens of questions are needed to determine income in rural areas. Depending on your confidence level in the validity of the data, decide whether you include it in this valuable article. Their education level could be a good proxy for SES.</p> <p>3. Results: Medication practice is given before and after the stroke incidence. What about presenting the physicians’ advice (Fig 2) similarly or vice versa.</p>	<p>1. In the Methods section, we have provided additional information on the diagnostic criteria for the benefit of readers (lines 119-124).</p> <p>2. Although income data has not been collected in a comprehensive manner, it can still provide some insight into the economic condition. On the other hand, we have successfully gathered information regarding the educational background of the individuals</p> <p>3. Modified as advised.</p>
<p>Editor’s Decision</p>	<p>Major revision</p>