

Review of: "How Competent are Health Professionals in Delivering Nutrition Education? A Cross-Sectional Study in Ebonyi State, Nigeria"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This study presents the analysis of the competence of Nigerian health professionals in nutrition education. The research holds potential interest. However, in its present form, the manuscript is not suitable for publication, in my opinion.

The 'Abstract,' 'Methods,' and 'Results' sections require substantial revision to improve clarity, include necessary information, and eliminate unnecessary content and errors. Additionally, the 'Discussion' section needs enhancement, as it currently lacks depth, primarily describing the results and containing redundancy.

Here are more detailed comments.

Abstract

The questionnaires are not mentioned, and their inclusion is necessary.

The authors reference the Chi-square test without presenting results, and the purpose of applying other statistics remains unclear.

A comment regarding predictors of health professionals' competencies is detailed below.

Introduction

The mention of "level of growth" is redundant, given the previous sentence discussing differences in the life cycle.

The sentence "Competency can be grouped into three [...] drives performance" is unclear and inconsistent with the terminology used in other sections of the article.

Study setting

The sample description is unclear, especially the reference to "44% being nurses with good knowledge of nutrition from a previous study in Ghana." Clarification about the data's originality and its relation to Nigeria is needed.

The public or private organization of the selected health facilities should be declared.

Study Instrument and Data Collection / Data management

The questionnaire description is inadequate; including a copy as supplementary information is recommended.

The methods for analyzing answers need clarification. The sentence "Similar calculations were used to derive health professional perception of nutrition education [...] and practice" is problematic because 'perception' and 'practice' lack a clear right or wrong answer, unlike 'knowledge of nutrition.' Furthermore, the authors should explicitly state how they handled null answers in their calculations.

The authors should explain how singular answers were analyzed to obtain summary values (7.4% with good knowledge of nutrition, 85.9% with good practice of nutrition education, 42.5% with good perception of nutrition education).

The authors mention the Chi-square test without presenting results.

Results

Table 2 displays positive results exclusively. However, Tables 3-6 exhibit both positive and negative outcomes. I recommend standardising the formal choice across all tables for consistency.

Table 3

The question "Patient NE is not an effective use of my time" is challenging to interpret. Clarification is needed regarding what constitutes a 'positive' answer.

The statement "Although a minor proportion of health professionals, 25.3%, had a positive assessment of their skills in nutrition education, a higher proportion, 74.7%, lacked nutrition education skills" is redundant, as it merely describes complementary percentages of positive and negative answers to the same question.

The overall competency in nutrition education, as presented in Table 5, appears perplexing. The authors claim it is derived from the proportion of respondents with good knowledge, perception, and practice of nutrition education. However, this seems inconsistent with the proportions declared for each component (7.4%, 42.5%, 85.9%, respectively).

Table 6 lacks some variables and groupings within variables, such as the length of practice, the age group ≤ 29 years, and the widowed or divorced groups.

The analysis on the effect of age class is unclear and differently described in the abstract and the text. It remains unclear with which age group individuals aged 40-49 years are being compared. The statement "health professionals who were ≤ 39 years were about six times more likely to have competency in nutrition education when compared with those aged 40-49 years" appears inaccurate.

Furthermore, the sentence "Those who had postgraduate level of training were four times less likely to have competency in nutrition education when compared with those who had just a diploma in nutrition (AOR= 0.4; 95% CI = 0.2 - 0.8)" is inconsistent with the AOR value and requires correction. A similar statement would align with a value of AOR=0.25.