

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.

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

Dear authors, thank you the opportunity you have provided me to review your article. The research topic is highly intriguing, and it is evident that considerable effort has been invested in conducting this study.

I have reviewed the article, and in my opinion, several modifications are needed to enhance it. Below, you will find my comments and suggestions for improvement.

Best regards,

Abstract:

In the Methods section of the abstract, the assertion that "A minor proportion of respondents, 43.0%," is mistakenly characterized as minor, as it essentially accounts for nearly half of the respondents. In a similar vein, the assertion that the knowledge level was commendable contradicts the documented findings. Moreover, the claim in the Conclusions section pertaining to the necessity for training contradicts the earlier statement that a significant percentage already undergoes such training. In summary, there exists a discrepancy between the reported outcomes and the study's conclusions.

Introduction:

The introduction lacks clarity and coherence. It should be rephrased to focus more precisely on the central theme.

Examples for improvement include:

"This underscores the relevance of comprehending nutrition principles and their impact on health, highlighting the imperative for health professionals to effectively involve patients in appropriate nutritional care services."

The final sentence is missing.

The third paragraph of the introduction lacks precision and seems disconnected from the main topic. It is recommended to rephrase it for better alignment. Additionally, the second sentence lacks a source – the drastic changes mentioned are not clear.

Similarly, the sentence following it lacks a source.

In summary, the introduction is weak, the rationale is not clearly articulated, the definition of competence is insufficient, and no previous studies differentiating professionals or studies comparing various professional groups were cited.

Methods:

In the study design subsection, specify the total number of professionals working in those settings.

In the sampling technique subsection, the inclusion of 3 dentists after a previous study on nurses raises questions. Why choose nurses again, especially when they constitute more than half of the participants? Moreover, the inclusion of dietitians is problematic as there are only 3, making it impossible to draw meaningful conclusions about 4 participants. Dietitians already possess a high level of knowledge due to their profession, and nutrition counseling is integral to their practice. Regarding dentists, with only 3, it is impossible to glean insights about them.

In the Data Management subsection, the phrase "The perpetuation of good health through prompt dietary behaviour cannot be overemphasized" needs clarification. Who collected the data – through printed questionnaires, links, or personal/telephone interviews? These details need inclusion.

Reporting results with a P-value <0.2 is not significant; typically, results with a significance level below 0.05 are considered.

Did you consider the variable called competence separately, or did you analyze each variable independently?

Results:

In Table 1, there is an error as it is mentioned there were 3 dentists, but the table states 4.

In the Highest Level of Training subsection, the distinctions between Degree, Diploma, and Postgraduate are unclear. Additionally, the definition of Postgraduate needs clarification – does it refer to further education or specialized training related to nutrition?

In Table 2, some sentences appear truncated, indicating potential translation issues. Also, it is not clear how the 92.6% was calculated.

In Table 6, it is not feasible to calculate for the 12 physiotherapists. Also, the column heading for column 5 needs a title.

Discussion:

In the second paragraph, the researchers provide a list of reasons explaining their findings without supporting literature. In the third paragraph, they discuss the implications without citing studies that demonstrate the benefits of nutritional counseling on patient health. In the fourth paragraph, they reference leaflets related to nutritional explanations or messages, but this was not addressed in the findings section. The limitations section does not address all the previously mentioned limitations.

