

## PEER REVIEW HISTORY

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### ARTICLE DETAILS

<b>TITLE (PROVISIONAL)</b>	A population based Cross sectional Study of Barriers to Uptake of Eye Care Services in South India: The Rapid Assessment of Visual Impairment (RAVI) Project
<b>AUTHORS</b>	Marmamula, Srinivas; Khanna, Rohit; Konegari, Shekhar; Rao, Gullapalli

### VERSION 1 - REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Sanil Joseph Lions Aravind Institute of Community Ophthalmology Aravind Eye Hospitals India
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	04-Apr-2014

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>This paper addresses a relevant issue of barriers to uptake of eye care. The findings clearly add to the existing knowledge as they show a reversal of trend in the types of barriers.</p> <p>The manuscript has been written in a simple and straight forward style.</p> <p>A few minor points to be considered by the authors:</p> <p>#1 RESULTS: page 7; lines 17-25: The p value seems to be significant (<math>p=0.05</math>) but the description says there is no difference in mean age between those examined and those not examined. This can be reviewed and presented more appropriately.</p> <p>#2 Figure 1 would rather be referred in the first paragraph of RESULTS as it connects to the overall results.</p> <p>#3 The sentence in Page 9 lines 5-10 would read better as follows:  Except for age groups, the services related and person related barriers were similar with respect to all other characteristics such as gender, education, area of residence and categories and cause of visual impairment.</p> <p>#4 The following sentence needs grammatical correction:</p>
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	Page 4 lines 24-32 (Research shows that...)
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Lisa Keay The George Institute for Global Health, Australia
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	13-Apr-2014

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>It is a strength that the methodology that the question asked was an open question and did not confine responses to a pre-conceived set of options.</p> <p>On page 9, it is stated that 'individuals were advised to wait....' I was not certain where this data came from - if this is one of the responses that the open question was coded to, this could be made clearer by quotation marks. Can you clarify for the reader who told the person to wait until cataracts are worse?</p> <p>I don't think that Figure 1 is needed – better if the data in Table 1 are grouped by personal or service related reasons. The format of Figure 1 implies a flow chart and this is not really what is being described.</p> <p>Much of the discussion and conclusions of the study relate to changing patterns in barriers to eyecare services. Are the authors confident that the methodology is sufficiently similar between the different studies to make this conclusion?</p> <p>It is a bit confusing that this cohort included people with cataract and uncorrected refractive error. They require different interventions so it is hard to combine the barriers. In the discussion it is stated that the barriers were not different but data to support this are not presented. I am surprised that the barriers are not different as having surgery is quite different to getting spectacles. Can you comment on this and justify the combination of people with refractive error and cataract in this analysis?</p> <p>Grammatical or stylistic comments:</p> <p>The last sentence of the first paragraph of the introduction needs re-writing, it is long and overly complex. On line 39 of page 7, the quotation marks are needed for 'aware of the problem, but can manage' For table 1, I think it would look better to list the number and the percentage in (). The percentage data in the tables need not have decimal places – easier to read as rounded whole numbers.</p> <p>This is a very insightful paper and much needed in the field.</p>
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## VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer: 1

This paper addresses a relevant issue of barriers to uptake of eye care. The findings clearly add to the existing knowledge as they show a reversal of trend in the types of barriers. The manuscript has been written in a simple and straight forward style. A few minor points to be considered by the authors:

#1

RESULTS:

page 7; lines 17-25:

The p value seems to be significant ( $p=0.05$ ) but the description says there is no difference in mean age between those examined and those not examined. This can be reviewed and presented more appropriately.

Figure 1 would rather be referred in the first paragraph of RESULTS as it connects to the overall results.

The sentence in Page 9 lines 5-10 would read better as follows:

Except for age groups, the services related and person related barriers were similar with respect to all other characteristics such as gender, education, area of residence and categories and cause of visual impairment.

Response: Revised as suggested

The following sentence needs grammatical correction:

Page 4 lines 24-32 (Research shows that...)

Response: Revised as suggested. The sentence now reads "Research has shown that the barriers to uptake of services tend to change over time due to several factors.[4, 5] Hence research on changing trends is necessary to guide service delivery programmes for planning strategies to address avoidable visual impairment in the community."

Reviewer: 2

It is a strength that the methodology that the question asked was an open question and did not confine responses to a pre-conceived set of options.

On page 9, it is stated that 'individuals were advised to wait....' I was not certain where this data came from - if this is one of the responses that the open question was coded to, this could be made clearer by quotation marks. Can you clarify for the reader who told the person to wait until cataracts are worse?

Response: Quotation marks are added as suggested. Eye care service providers advised the individuals to wait for cataract surgery. This used to be a common practice in India when cataract was operated only in advance stages.

I don't think that Figure 1 is needed – better if the data in Table 1 are grouped by personal or service related reasons. The format of Figure 1 implies a flow chart and this is not really what is being described.

Response: We have modified the Figure 1

Much of the discussion and conclusions of the study relate to changing patterns in barriers to eyecare services. Are the authors confident that the methodology is sufficiently similar between the different studies to make this conclusion?

Response: Earlier studies used a similar methodology as this study, hence it is reasonable to conclude that there is change in patterns in barriers to eye care services.

It is a bit confusing that this cohort included people with cataract and uncorrected refractive error. They require different interventions so it is hard to combine the barriers. In the discussion it is stated that the barriers were not different but data to support this are not presented. I am surprised that the barriers are not different as having surgery is quite different to getting spectacles. Can you comment on this and justify the combination of people with refractive error and cataract in this analysis?

Response: We have added the following text to make this point.

“We did not find any difference in ‘person related’ and ‘service related’ barriers among those with cataract and uncorrected refractive errors though they require a very different intervention. This could be possible as the barriers question was asked to all those with avoidable visual impairment and not specific to a cause. It is possible that a significant proportion of people may not have known the cause of their visual impairment. It is also possible that some of those who were visually impaired due to uncorrected refractive errors felt that their visual impairment was due to cataract and not refractive errors and vice-versa.”

Grammatical or stylistic comments:

The last sentence of the first paragraph of the introduction needs re-writing, it is long and overly complex.

On line 39 of page 7, the quotation marks are needed for ‘aware of the problem, but can manage’

Response: Revised as suggested

For table 1, I think it would look better to list the number and the percentage in (). The percentage data in the tables need not have decimal places – easier to read as rounded whole numbers.

Response: Table 1 is revised as suggested. Number with percentage in () is now included.

This is a very insightful paper and much needed in the field.