

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Protocol for Developing a Database of Zoonotic Disease Research in India (DoZooRI)
AUTHORS	Chatterjee, Pranab; Bhaumik, Soumyadeep; Chauhan, Abhimanyu; Kakkar, Manish

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Dr. Balbir Bagicha Singh Guru Angad Dev Veterinary & Animal Sciences University, Ludhiana India
REVIEW RETURNED	02-Jun-2017

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>The development of a Database of zoonotic Disease Research in India will enhance the availability of the published literature and will be immensely beneficial for policy development. The paper may be accepted after incorporating the suggested changes.</p> <p>Specific comments</p> <p>Page 2-Line 54: Change to “Developing countries such as” Strengths and limitations The authors are encouraged to discuss ‘publication bias’ under the limitations.</p> <p>Page 4 line 4 – Correct as ‘Zoonoses, diseases and infections’ Page 4 Line 32 -33: In addition to mentioned issues, we also need to synthesise data ‘to allocate resources’ Rationale for development of database of zoonotic disease research in India The importance for ‘Evidence-based veterinary medicine’ may also be discussed.</p> <p>Page 7 Study design The time-period of database may be defined. (for e.g. 1947-2017) Database tagging Tagging may be done as per host involved eg. Human, multi-host, cattle etc.</p>
-------------------------	--

REVIEWER	Rubén Bueno Laboratorios Lokímica
REVIEW RETURNED	23-Aug-2017

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>I am not familiarized with "Protocol" section of the journal (although I read the note from the Editors about the Instructions for reviewers of study protocols), but in my opinion current manuscript is not suitable for a scientific journal. The idea and preliminary goals are fine and interesting, but the analysis is not well described. Moreover interest of the paper for readers is not clear. I suggest and encourage to modify entirely the manuscript, stating well the objectives and explain the interest of this protocol for other researchers or sanitary professionals. If this is done, I will be happy and glad to act as reviewer again.</p>
-------------------------	---

VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer 1: Dr. Balbir Bagicha Singh

1. Page 2-Line 54: Change to “Developing countries such as”

Response: Changed as suggested.

2. Strengths and limitations

The authors are encouraged to discuss ‘publication bias’ under the limitations.

Response: We appreciate the suggestion. Added the following text to the strengths and limitations part (page 2, lines 57-60):

However, we envisage that the issue of publication bias might be resolved to a large extent in future iterations of the database as collaborators would contribute by adding more citations from the literature to make it a more comprehensive repository of zoonotic disease research in India.

3. Page 4 line 4 – Correct as ‘Zoonoses, diseases and infections’

Response: Edited as suggested, though we believe the meaning remains unchanged in either of the versions.

4. Page 4 Line 32 -33: In addition to mentioned issues, we also need to synthesise data ‘to allocate resources’

Response: We appreciate this input from the reviewer and have added a sentence to accordingly address this issue. Inserted sentence in Lines 78-80:

Further, given the resource restrictions and multiple competing priorities that need to be addressed by policymakers and funders alike, the synthesised evidence could help in making evidence informed decisions to guide resource allocation.

5. Rationale for development of database of zoonotic disease research in India: The importance for ‘Evidence-based veterinary medicine’ may also be discussed.

Response: We believe that our manuscript endorses the One Health approach and as such, we encompass the human, veterinary and environmental health practitioners whenever we mention health practitioners. However, to make this clearer, we have modified the sentence in lines 95-98 to read as follows:

This would provide critical support for clinical or public health practice, including, but not limited to the fields of human, veterinary and environmental health, by facilitating evidence syntheses or planning of future research in line with research gaps. The multidisciplinary nature of the database in fact provides and impetus for this purpose.

6. Page 7 Study design The time-period of database may be defined. (for e.g. 1947-2017)

Response: We have kept the database free from such time bounds as we envision such impositions would narrow the mandate of the database and thus, we would lose out on a precious opportunity for

value addition. Since the database can be time-restricted by researchers who choose to conduct secondary analyses or who choose to pick a particular area covered by the database, we think it would be better if the time restrictions were not imposed at this stage of the work.

7. Database tagging Tagging may be done as per host involved eg. Human, multi-host, cattle etc.

Response: This is a very valuable suggestion and we have made appropriate edits throughout the body of the manuscript to reflect adherence to this suggestion. The edits incorporated are as follows:

8. Lines 36-38: Individual studies will be tagged based on key pre-identified parameters (disease, study design, study type, location, randomization status and interventions, host involvement, and others as applicable)

Line 249: • Based on host involved: human, cattle, wild animals, multi-host, invertebrate vectors, etc.

Reviewer 2: Dr. Ruben Bueno

1. The idea and preliminary goals are fine and interesting, but the analysis is not well described.

Response: We would like to thank the reviewer for his close reading of the manuscript and critical comments on improving it. However, since we are proposing this manuscript as a protocol paper on developing a database of all studies, and not as a full research article, we think that it would be premature to include a detailed analysis plan. We envision the database being used for a number of purposes, by a number of stakeholders, working at various levels. This would mean that the database and the analysis plan should be amenable to a wide range of queries, study designs, and analysis plans. Thus, to remove restrictions on later usage of the data curated within this database, we have focused on the method of developing, maintaining and disseminating the database rather than the analysis of the same.

2. Moreover interest of the paper for readers is not clear.

Response: We strongly believe that the manuscript is of immense importance and interest to human, animal and environmental health professionals alike. This database proposes the curating the first of its kind of evidence-base for zoonotic diseases in India. This is likely to be interest to Indian and international scholars alike given the global health security threat posed by zoonotic and emerging diseases.

3. I suggest and encourage to modify entirely the manuscript, stating well the objectives and explain the interest of this protocol for other researchers or sanitary professionals.

Response: We have made appropriate edits throughout the body of the manuscript in line with the suggestions from the reviewers and editorial team. We would be happy to make further edits in subsequent rounds of review if such a need arises.

We have reworded the objective of the manuscript to further reflect this. Currently it reads as below:

Lines 146-150:

Objective

To develop a database of publications resulting from research conducted on a set of priority zoonotic diseases in India and tag them in a manner so as to facilitate further conduct of evidence syntheses and landscaping of zoonotic disease research in India

Additionally, to reflect the importance of this protocol manuscript, we have added the following content to justify the need to publish this work:

Lines 128-133: Additionally, this protocol for the development of the database should be of interest to professionals involved with human, animal and environmental health alike. This manuscript outlines the development of a database that proposes curating the first of its kind of evidence-base for zoonotic diseases in India. This is likely to be interest to Indian and international scholars alike given the global health security threat posed by zoonotic and emerging diseases.

We agree that the second reviewer's comments were critical, but at the same time we would like to stand by our assertion that the protocol presents an alternate, systematic method to develop a database, using which a landscape mapping analysis can be undertaken to inform the process of evidence-based policy making. Current methods are largely based on expert understanding of the epidemiology, burden and determinants of zoonotic and emerging infectious diseases.

We continue to believe that this protocol is highly relevant to the current milieu of evidence-based policy making, especially in the arena of emerging and zoonotic diseases, many of which do not fall under the purview of surveillance systems.

We believe that BMJ Open provides a wide, international readership, which would be interested in the proposed methodology and would therefore, would like to place the manuscript for your consideration. We look forward to work with the editorial team and the reviewers should they advocate any further edits and comments on the manuscript. We look forward to see this paper in the columns of the BMJ Open.

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Dr. Balbir Bagicha Singh Guru Angad Dev Veterinary & Animal Sciences University, India
REVIEW RETURNED	12-Oct-2017

GENERAL COMMENTS	May be accepted
-------------------------	-----------------

REVIEWER	Rubén Bueno Laboratorios Lokímica, Spain
REVIEW RETURNED	11-Oct-2017

GENERAL COMMENTS	Changes done in the manuscript have increased the quality of the paper. Now the objectives and the justification of the interest of the article are both clear. The information included in the paper could be useful for people involved in Public Health and Zoonoses in India. I suggest to accept the manuscript in its current form.
-------------------------	---