



SDI Review Form 1.5

PART A:

Journal Name:	International Journal of TROPICAL DISEASE & Health
Manuscript Number:	MS: 2012/IJTDH/1904
Title of the Manuscript:	Risk factors associated with two viperid snake bites in Sri Lanka: a case control study.

(Note: Title of different sections as proposed below may differ in case of review paper)



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PART B: Review Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part and write here 'Corrected'/ if not agreed, give suitable justifications)
General comment:	A good manuscript with potential of being published	
Specific comments:	The text grammatical expressions were sometimes confusing	
Title and abstract	1. Aim: I suggest the 'Aim' (in lines 5, 6) of the study should read: This study was to assess victim's environmental and behavioural risk factors that promote bites from two viperid snakes. 2. Methods: The sentence (in lines 10, 11, 12) could also read "Age and gender matched control group was selected from relatives and neighbourhood of the cases in a ratio of 1case:2controls" as this conveys the same message. 3. Results: In line 14, you indicated that 14 risk factors were assessed contradicting line 67 of Methods where you said 13 risk factors were considered. What was the 14th risk factor? (could it be the time of bite?) It will also be good to include the p-values to the results stated for the purpose of indicating significance.	1. Corrected 2. Corrected 3. Line 14 was corrected as "...13 risk factors were assessed..." - P values were not included as the confidence intervals and odds ratios are more informative than P value.
Introduction (Is the problem/objective of this study original, important and well defined?)	1. While the risk factors for snakebite especial viper bites are not new, the existing literature is old and the need to re-affirm their relevance in today's preventive strategies. 2. Some omissions observed include: line 40 "The common victim of snake bite" , should read "the commonest victim of..." ; line 42 – the sentence should read "promote snake bites and thus education on risk factors of snake bite would help prevent bites."Line 44&45: the sentence should read "To implement preventive strategies, there needs to be a clear understanding of the possible risk factors and their level of significant association with viper bites." 3. Line 52 sentence should read:" the aim of this study was to study the environmental and behavioural risk factors..."	1. Corrected 2. Corrected 3. Corrected
Are all the references cited relevant, adequate? Are there any other suitable current references authors need to cite?	4. Though over 70% of the cited references are over 10years old, most are local and quite relevant to the discussion.	-
Materials & methods (Kindly comment on the suitability of	1. Very little information was given to the reader about the	1. Corrected



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<i>the methods. Sufficient details of the methods should be provided to allow peers to evaluate and/or replicate the work)</i>	hospital were the study was carried out. Is the hospital suitably equipped to manage snakebites e.g. Is it referral centre for snakebite, Are there trained personnel for snakebite management including identification of the snakes? How did the medical officer identify the snakes? Did he have to compare the killed snakes brought to hospital with a hospital specimen? Did he have problem identifying some of the snakes? What other snakes present at this hospital?. 2. Line 63 should read: "The age and gender matched control group was selected from relatives and neighbourhood of cases (i.e. similar socio-economic and cultural characteristics but without history of snake bites during their lifetime) in a ratio of 1 case: 2 controls (56 cases and 112 controls)." 3. The sentence in line 66 should read : "From common knowledge and previous study findings (.....), 13 (or 14) risk factors were studied..." 4. I would suggest that you categorised the risk factors into environmental and behavioural risk factors since you mentioned it in the abstract. 5. Line 77:"the word 'presented'" was duplicated.	2. Corrected 3. Corrected 4. Tested risk factors were categorized as "general risks and risks at the time of bite", considering the practical relevance, despite the association with environmental conditions and human behaviour. 5. Corrected
Results & discussion (Kindly comment on: 1. Are the data well controlled and robust? 2. Authors should provide relevant references during discussion. 3. Discussion and conclusions should be based on actual facts and figures. Biased claims should be pointed out. 4. Are statistical analyses must for this paper? If yes, have sufficient and appropriate statistical analyses been carried out?)	1. Data was adequately controlled. There was relevant especially local references for discussion 2. Line 104 should read: "The HNV and RV snakes were considered in this study because they share common ecological characteristics (....)". 3. Line 106 should read: "Majority of the patients were middle aged and belonged to a lower income group 4. The sentence beginning in line 111-113 should read: studies in developing countries had shown that about half of the victims are farmer (ref) as opposed to the studies in the developed nations like the US where the incidence is low among farmers but more among snake handlers (ref).	1. – 2. Corrected 3. Corrected 4. Corrected
Are there any ethical or competing interest issues?	No comments	-
Conclusion (Is the conclusion supported by the data, discussed inside the manuscript? Conclusions should not be biased and should be based on the data, presented inside the manuscript only)	While I will agree that most of the risk factors are easily remediable using health education, low level of financial status (i.e. low socioeconomic status) requires far more than health education. Hence may need to be restated.	Corrected
References		-