

Report on meeting with Olurotimi Bankoke Ajake on Wednesday 17th June 2015

The meeting with Mr Olurotimi Bankoke Ajake, PhD candidate, was called following concerns raised in relation to his June 2015 PhD evaluation (attached) and concerns in relation to the PLOS ONE Paper "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease".

From: Iratxe Puebla [<mailto:ipuebla@plos.org>]

Sent: 01 July 2015 15:21

To: Kabir, Zubair; PLOS ONE

Cc: Perry, Ivan; fitz.tony@gmail.com; toconnor@muh.ie; Greiner, Birgit

Subject: RE: Request for withdrawal of the paper "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease"- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

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Dear Dr Kabir,

Thank you for your email regarding the article 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease'. I had been in touch with Prof Perry in relation to this article, I appreciate your follow-up email and the additional information supplied regarding the concerns about the study.

I note you have requested the withdrawal of the publication, I would like to clarify that in instances where major concerns are identified regarding the correctness or integrity of published work, PLOS ONE will issue a retraction,

this involves the publication of a retraction notice, however the original full-text article remains. The retraction is also indexed in PubMed.

Olurotimi Bankole Ajagbe is listed as corresponding author of the article, I will proceed to contact him in relation to this request for retraction, and will also discuss the case with colleagues in the editorial team. I will follow up in due course with further information.

With best wishes,

Iratxe

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Iratxe Puebla | Deputy Editor, *PLOS ONE*

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California (U.S.) corporation #C2354500, based in San Francisco

From: Kabir, Zubair [<mailto:z.kabir@ucc.ie>]

Sent: 25 June 2015 17:58

To: PLOS ONE

Cc: Iratxe Puebla; Perry, Ivan; fitz.tony@gmail.com; toconnor@muh.ie; Greiner, Birgit

Subject: Request for withdrawal of the paper "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease"- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Importance: High

Dear Editor,

3

As a Senior Author of the aforementioned paper published in PLoS ONE in November 2014, please be advised that this paper has significant concerns in relation to statistical analysis and the overall quality. Prof Ivan Perry- the Chair of our Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at University College Cork (Ireland) had earlier been in contact with the Editorial Office in this regard. We also had an internal Departmental review of this paper and the raw data recently. The concerns and the major errors raised were as follows:

1. The paper was submitted without prior approval and review by the senior authors – this is in serious breach with the Departmental publication policy

2. The survival analysis is methodologically incorrect and fundamentally flawed.

The paper states that there were 647 bacteriologically confirmed TB patients. This is incorrect as there were only 500 patients and for some of these we had no information after the initial visit. The analysis does not allow for the fact that patients were assessed on multiple occasions and treats each visit as an independent event.

The handling of risk factors with more than two categories (marital status, ethnicity, living status, occupation and educational status) is incorrect. In particular the Cox analysis reported in table 4 treats categorical factors as continuous. The reported hazard ratios are meaningless.

3. The name of the Department is also incorrect in the current form (my name was also spelled incorrect, but thankfully, this was resolved timely)

In agreement with the Departmental internal review board and all senior authors listed in this particular paper, we would request a withdrawal of this paper from the journal publication list with immediate effect. However, we welcome your advice and we will be guided by you as to how best to proceed in relation to correcting the published research in PubMed and other relevant databases.

Finally, we would like to reiterate that this paper is fundamentally flawed requiring complex statistical analysis, which we do not feel is worthwhile at this particular stage.

Apologies for the inconveniences!

Many thanks in advance.

Kind regards,

Zubair

Zubair Kabir MD, PhD, FRSPH, FCCP
Senior Lecturer
Department of Epidemiology & Public Health
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Western Gateway Building
University College Cork,
Cork, Ireland
Email: z.kabir@ucc.ie
Phone: +353-21-4205566
Web: <http://research.ucc.ie/profiles/C010/zkabir>

Sub: Request for withdrawal of the paper "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease" - DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Dear Editor,

As a Senior Author of the aforementioned paper published in PLoS ONE in November 2014, please be advised that this paper has significant concerns in relation to statistical analysis and the overall quality. Prof Ivan Perry- the Chair of our Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at University College Cork (Ireland) had earlier been in contact with the Editorial Office in this regard. We also had an internal Departmental review of this paper and the raw data recently. The concerns and the major errors raised were as follows:

1. The paper was submitted without prior approval and review by the senior authors – this is in serious breach with the Departmental publication policy
2. The survival analysis is methodologically incorrect and fundamentally flawed.

The paper states that there were 647 bacteriologically confirmed TB patients. This is incorrect as there were only 500 patients and for some of these we had no information after the initial visit. The analysis does not allow for the fact that patients were assessed on multiple occasions and treats each visit as an independent event.

The handling of risk factors with more than two categories (marital status, ethnicity, living status, occupation and educational status) is incorrect. In particular the Cox analysis reported in table 4 treats categorical factors as continuous. The reported hazard ratios are meaningless.

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In agreement with the Departmental internal review board and all senior authors listed in this particular paper, we would request a withdrawal of this paper from the journal publication list with immediate effect. However, we welcome your advice and we will be guided by you as to how best to proceed in relation to correcting the published research in PubMed and other relevant databases. In addition, we would like to reiterate that this paper is fundamentally flawed requiring complex statistical analysis, which we do not feel is worthwhile at this particular stage.

Apologies for the inconveniences!

Many thanks in advance.

Kind regards,

Dr Zubair Kabir

Whelan Curtin, Declan



From: Whelan Curtin, Declan
Sent: 07 June 2018 14:16
To: 'plosone@plos.org'
Subject: FW: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Importance: High

Good afternoon,

I have recently taken on the role of School Manager in the School of Public Health University College Cork.

The below email thread gives details on an issue which has been ongoing since August 2015 without resolve and with little communication from Plos One.

The paper mentioned "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838" should be retracted immediately as requested by the authors on several occasions. It is now of great concern to our School and offers a serious risk of reputational damage.

I would appreciate a response detailing the actions necessary for this retraction as soon as possible.

Regards,

Declan

Declan Whelan-Curtin | School Manager

School of Public Health

Office 4.06 | 4th Floor Western Gateway Building | University College Cork

Tel: (021) 420 5501 | declan.whelancurtin@ucc.ie |



School of
Public Health

From: Kabir, Zubair
Sent: 06 June 2018 16:55
To: 'Iratxe Puebla' <ipuebla@plos.org>
Cc: Perry, Ivan <i.perry@ucc.ie>; Murphy, Vicky <V.Murphy@ucc.ie>; Whelan Curtin, Declan <declan.whelancurtin@ucc.ie>; jheber@plos.org
Subject: RE: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838
Importance: High

Dear Dr Puebla,

I hope you are keeping well.

I am following on the request below that was put forwarded to your office almost 3 years ago, and has not been acted upon yet!

We would greatly appreciate if you could complete this very important task at the earliest opportunity.

10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Importance: High

Dear Dr Puebla,

I hope you are keeping well.

I am following on the request below that was put forwarded to your office almost 3 years ago, and has not been acted upon yet!

We would greatly appreciate if you could complete this very important task at the earliest opportunity.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need further clarifications.

Many thanks for your attention.

Kind regards,

Zubair

Zubair Kabir MD, PhD, FRSPH, FCCP

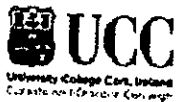
Senior Lecturer

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Phone: +353-21-4205566

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Editor-in-Chief: <http://insights.sagepub.com/zubair-kabir-eic139>



School of
Public Health

From: Kabir, Zubair

Sent: 21 March 2017 17:53

To: 'Iratxe Puebla'

Cc: Perry, Ivan; Murphy, Vicky

Subject: RE: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Importance: High

Dear Dr Puebla,

Greetings from Ireland!

I hope you are keeping well.

I am following on the paper (DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838) that was earlier agreed upon to be retracted from PLoS one.

We would greatly appreciate if this was followed on through at the earliest opportunity, as a matter of serious urgency from the 'Research Integrity' perspective at our University.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need additional information.

Many thanks in advance.

Kind regards,

Zubair

Zubair Kabir MD, PhD, FRSPH, FCCP

Senior Lecturer

Department of Epidemiology & Public Health

Room 4.20

Western Gateway Building

University College Cork,
Cork, Ireland
Email: z.kabir@ucc.ie
Phone: +353-21-4205566
Web: <http://research.ucc.ie/profiles/C010/zkabir>

From: Kabir, Zubair
Sent: 12 February 2016 18:27
To: Iratxe Puebla; Perry, Ivan
Cc: Greiner, Birgit
Subject: RE: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease
Importance: High

Dear Iratxe,
On behalf of Professor Ivan Perry I am following up on the email below.
As a matter of urgency, we would greatly appreciate if the paper in question is retracted at the earliest opportunity.
Many thanks in advance.
Kind regards,
Zubair

Zubair Kabir MD, PhD, FRSPH, FCCP
Senior Lecturer
Department of Epidemiology & Public Health
Room 4.20
Western Gateway Building
University College Cork,
Cork, Ireland
Email: z.kabir@ucc.ie
Phone: +353-21-4205566
Web: <http://research.ucc.ie/profiles/C010/zkabir>

From: Iratxe Puebla [<mailto:ipuebla@plos.org>]
Sent: 31 August 2015 06:49
To: Perry, Ivan
Cc: Kabir, Zubair; Greiner, Birgit
Subject: RE: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease

Dear Ivan,

Thank you for your email. I will discuss Mr Ajagbe's email this week with senior colleagues and I will follow up soon in relation to the processing of the retraction.

With best wishes,

Iratxe

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From: Perry, Ivan [<mailto:i.perry@ucc.ie>]
Sent: 26 August 2015 18:01
To: Iratxe Puebla
Cc: Kabir, Zubair; Greiner, Birgit
Subject: FW: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease

Dear Iratxe,

I note that Mr Olurotimi Ajagbe who was the corresponding author on this paper has now formally requested retraction. He has also withdrawn from our Department's PhD programme. Please advise if further action is required from our department to effect retraction of this paper.

With best wishes,

Ivan Perry

Ivan J Perry, MD, PhD
Professor of Public Health
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UCC - First university in the world to be awarded the international Green Flag for environmental friendliness
Cork - One of world's Top 10 Cities to Visit in 2010 (*Lonely Planet 2010*)
Ireland - top tourist destination for 2011 (*Frommer's Travel Guide*)

From: Olurotimi Bankole Ajagbe [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 August 2015 07:25
To: Iratxe Puebla
Cc: Perry, Ivan
Subject: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease

Dear Iratxe,

I am writing to request the retraction of the publication: 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease'. This request is in line with the recommendation of the internal review panel of the department of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College Cork regarding the concerns raised about the paper.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity given to us to publish this work in PLOS ONE journal.

With best wishes

Whelan Curtin, Declan

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From: Kabir, Zubair
Sent: 08 June 2018 15:05
To: Iratxe Puebla
Cc: Perry, Ivan; Murphy, Vicky; Whelan Curtin, Declan; Joerg Heber
Subject: RE: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Importance: High

Dear Iratxe,
No problem at all. Many thanks for the response, and hopefully this is resolved in the next few days.
Much appreciated.
Looking forward to further updates!
Kindest regards,
Zubair

From: Iratxe Puebla [mailto:ipuebla@plos.org]
Sent: 08 June 2018 11:10
To: Kabir, Zubair
Cc: Perry, Ivan; Murphy, Vicky; Whelan Curtin, Declan; Joerg Heber
Subject: RE: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Dear Dr Kabir,

Thank you for your message, I apologize for the delay following up with you on the concerns regarding the *PLOS ONE* article 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease'.

We have reviewed and discussed internally and I can confirm that we will proceed with the retraction of the article, we are working on the retraction notice and we will share this once available, we should be in touch with a further update in a few days.

With best wishes,

Iratxe

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California (U.S.) corporation #C2354500, based in San Francisco

From: Kabir, Zubair <z.kabir@ucc.ie>
Sent: 06 June 2018 16:55
To: Iratxe Puebla <ipuebla@plos.org>
Cc: Perry, Ivan <i.perry@ucc.ie>; Murphy, Vicky <V.Murphy@ucc.ie>; Whelan Curtin, Declan <declan.whelancurtin@ucc.ie>; Joerg Heber <jheber@plos.org>
Subject: RE: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease- DOI:

Whelan Curtin, Declan

9

From: Perry, Ivan
Sent: 11 June 2018 16:22
To: Kabir, Zubair
Cc: Whelan Curtin, Declan
Subject: RE: PLOS ONE article 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease'

Zubair,

This is great. I am relieved and delighted !

Ivan

Ivan J Perry, MD, PhD
Professor of Public Health
School of Public Health
Room 4.18
Western Gateway Building
University College Cork

Tel: +353-21-4205506
Fax: +353-21-4205469
E-mail: i.perry@ucc.ie

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UCC - First university in the world to be awarded the international Green Flag for **environmental friendliness**
University College Cork is named The Sunday Times University of the Year 2016 and 2017: www.ucc.ie/en/

From: Kabir, Zubair
Sent: 11 June 2018 14:19
To: Perry, Ivan
Cc: Whelan Curtin, Declan
Subject: RE: PLOS ONE article 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease'

Dear Ivan,

Please see the note from PLoS One, and also the retraction notice. I am sure that both Timi and Terry had earlier confirmed their approval of retraction?

Thanks and all the best,

Zubair

From: Iratxe Puebla [<mailto:ipuebla@plos.org>]

Sent: 09 June 2018 08:36

To: Kabir, Zubair; [REDACTED]

Subject: PLOS ONE article 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease'

Dear Mr Ajagbe, Dr Kabair, Dr O'Connor,

I am writing to you regarding the *PLOS ONE* article titled 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease' (pone.0112838).

Dr Kabair and the University College Cork raised concerns about the article after its publication, I apologize for not having followed up with you earlier in relation to this matter.

We have considered the concerns raised and the recommendation by University College Cork and I am writing to let you know that we will proceed to retract the article. I have included the retraction notice below for your reference. If you have any objections to the retraction please let me know as soon as possible so that we can update the last paragraph accordingly.

I would be grateful if you could get back to me by the **next June 14** if you have any comments.

Sincerely,

Iratxe

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California (U.S.) corporation #C2354500, based in San Francisco

Retraction notice

Following publication of this article, concerns were raised about the survival analysis: there are inaccuracies in the number of bacteriologically confirmed tuberculosis patients, patients assessed multiple times were overrepresented in the dataset, and the statistical analysis to handle risk factors with more than two categories is incorrect. In addition, there are concerns that the corresponding author completed the submission of the manuscript without approval by the listed co-authors.

The University College Cork has completed an investigation and confirmed the concerns raised.

In light of the concerns about the methodology and conclusions reported in the article and in line with the recommendation by the University College Cork, the *PLOS ONE* Editors retract this publication.

Zubair Kabir agreed with the retraction, Olurotimi Bankole Ajagbe and Terry O'Connor agree/disagreed with the retraction.

Dear Iratxe,

Thank you for processing this retraction.

I am happy with the content of the retraction notice.

Please note that the corresponding author- Mr Ajagbe had earlier agreed to the retraction- a copy of his email is pasted below (highlighted), which was addressed to you.

I hope this helps.

Many thanks.

Kind regards,

Zubair

From: Olurotimi Bankole Ajagbe [mailto: [REDACTED]]

Sent: 26 August 2015 07:25

To: Iratxe Puebla

Cc: Perry, Ivan

Subject: Request for the retraction of paper: Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease

Dear Iratxe,

I am writing to request the retraction of the publication: 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis disease'. This request is in line with the recommendation of the internal review panel of the department of Epidemiology and Public Health, University College Cork regarding the concerns raised about the paper.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity given to us to publish this work in PLOS ONE journal.

With best wishes

Olurotimi Ajagbe

From: Iratxe Puebla [mailto:ipuebla@plos.org]

Sent: 09 June 2018 08:36

To: Kabir, Zubair; [REDACTED]

Subject: PLOS ONE article 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease'

Dear Mr Ajagbe, Dr Kabair, Dr O'Connor,

I am writing to you regarding the *PLOS ONE* article titled 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease' (pone.0112838).

Dr Kabair and the University College Cork raised concerns about the article after its publication, I apologize for not having followed up with you earlier in relation to this matter.

We have considered the concerns raised and the recommendation by University College Cork and I am writing to let you know that we will proceed to retract the article. I have included the retraction notice below for your reference. If you have any objections to the retraction please let me know as soon as possible so that we can update the last paragraph accordingly.

I would be grateful if you could get back to me by the **next June 14** if you have any comments.

Sincerely,

Iratxe

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Zubair Kabir agreed with the retraction, Olurotimi Bankole Ajagbe and Terry O'Connor agree/disagreed with the retraction.

Whelan Curtin, Declan

From: Perry, Ivan
Sent: 08 October 2018 14:25
To: Whelan Curtin, Declan
Cc: Kabir, Zubair
Subject: FW: Request for withdrawal of the paper "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease"- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Ivan J Perry, MD, PhD
Professor of Public Health
School of Public Health
Room 4.18
Western Gateway Building
University College Cork

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E-mail: i.perry@ucc.ie

Home Page: <http://www.ucc.ie/academic/pubh/>
UCC - First university in the world to be awarded the international Green Flag for **environmental friendliness**
University College Cork is named The Sunday Times University of the Year 2016 and 2017: www.ucc.ie/en/

From: Perry, Ivan
Sent: 24 August 2015 12:22
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Request for withdrawal of the paper "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease"- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Timi,

This is the key email that requires a response.

Ivan

Ivan J Perry, MD, PhD
Professor of Public Health
Department of Epidemiology & Public Health
Room 4.18
Western Gateway Building
University College Cork

Tel: +353-21-4205506
Fax: +353-21-4205469
E-mail: i.perry@ucc.ie

Home Page: <http://www.ucc.ie/academic/pubh/>
UCC - First university in the world to be awarded the international Green Flag for **environmental friendliness**
Cork - One of **world's Top 10 Cities** to Visit in 2010 (*Lonely Planet 2010*)
Ireland - top tourist destination for 2011 (*Frommer's Travel Guide*)

From: Perry, Ivan

Sent: 04 August 2015 14:55

To: Iratxe Puebla; Kabir, Zubair

Subject: RE: Request for withdrawal of the paper "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease"- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Dear Dr Puebla,

Thank you for your email. I am on annual leave at present but I will revert with a formal request for retraction from UCC on my return in mid August.

With best wishes,

Ivan Perry

Sent from Samsung mobile

Iratxe Puebla <ipuebla@plos.org> wrote:

Dear Professor Perry,

I am writing to follow up on my letter to Dr Kabir regarding the *PLOS ONE* article 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease'.

As I noted, I contacted the corresponding author Olurotimi Bankole Ajagbe who indicated that he had shared the manuscript with the co-authors before submission, and noted that he considered the methodology was appropriate. Mr Ajagbe did not comment on whether the co-authors provided specific approval for the submission of the manuscript for publication, or on the request for a retraction.

We appreciate that substantial concerns have been raised both in terms of the lack of internal approval for the submission of the manuscript and about the methodological rigor of the analyses. We also understand that the University College Cork considers the publication should be retracted.

As I indicated to Dr Kabir, *PLOS ONE* abides by recommendations issued by institutions and we will proceed with the retraction of a publication if the authors' institution issues a recommendation to this effect. Would it be possible for the University College Cork to issue a formal letter outlining the concerns about the article and recommending the retraction of the publication?

The journal would act on such recommendation, and the retraction notice would indicate that the retraction has support from the University College Cork which has reviewed the matter.

Please let me know if you have any queries in relation to the above. I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Iratxe

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[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Blog](#)

California (U.S.) corporation #C2354500, based in San Francisco

From: Perry, Ivan [<mailto:i.perry@ucc.ie>]

Sent: 01 July 2015 17:12

To: Iratxe Puebla; Kabir, Zubair; PLOS ONE
Cc: [REDACTED] toconnor@muh.ie; Greiner, Birgit
Subject: RE: Request for withdrawal of the paper "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease"- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Dear Iratxe,

Thank you for this clarification. If possible it would be important to state in the retraction notice that the paper was submitted without prior approval of the senior authors and was retracted at their request. Clearly there are procedural issues in relation to this unfortunate incident for us to consider at Department level and this is well underway. However there are also issues in relation to Plos One review process that require acknowledgement and review.

With best wishes,

Ivan Perry

Sent from Samsung mobile

Iratxe Puebla <ipuebla@plos.org> wrote:
Dear Dr Kabir,

Thank you for your email regarding the article 'Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease'. I had been in touch with Prof Perry in relation to this article, I appreciate your follow-up email and the additional information supplied regarding the concerns about the study.

I note you have requested the withdrawal of the publication, I would like to clarify that in instances where major concerns are identified regarding the correctness or integrity of published work, PLOS ONE will issue a retraction, this involves the publication of a retraction notice, however the original full-text article remains. The retraction is also indexed in PubMed.

Olurotimi Bankole Ajagbe is listed as corresponding author of the article, I will proceed to contact him in relation to this request for retraction, and will also discuss the case with colleagues in the editorial team. I will follow up in due course with further information.

With best wishes,

Iratxe

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California (U.S.) corporation #C2354500, based in San Francisco

From: Kabir, Zubair [<mailto:z.kabir@ucc.ie>]

Sent: 25 June 2015 17:58

To: PLOS ONE

Cc: Iratxe Puebla; Perry, Ivan; fitz.tony@gmail.com; toconnor@muh.ie; Greiner, Birgit

Subject: Request for withdrawal of the paper "Survival Analysis of Adult Tuberculosis Disease"- DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0112838

Importance: High

Dear Editor,

As a Senior Author of the aforementioned paper published in PLoS ONE in November 2014, please be advised that this paper has significant concerns in relation to statistical analysis and the overall quality. Prof Ivan Perry- the Chair of our Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at University College Cork (Ireland) had earlier been in contact with the Editorial Office in this regard. We also had an internal Departmental review of this paper and the raw data recently. The concerns and the major errors raised were as follows:

1. The paper was submitted without prior approval and review by the senior authors – this is in serious breach with the Departmental publication policy

2. The survival analysis is methodologically incorrect and fundamentally flawed.

The paper states that there were 647 bacteriologically confirmed TB patients. This is incorrect as there were only 500 patients and for some of these we had no information after the initial visit. The analysis does not allow for the fact that patients were assessed on multiple occasions and treats each visit as an independent event.

The handling of risk factors with more than two categories (marital status, ethnicity, living status, occupation and educational status) is incorrect. In particular the Cox analysis reported in table 4 treats categorical factors as continuous. The reported hazard ratios are meaningless.

3. The name of the Department is also incorrect in the current form (my name was also spelled incorrect, but thankfully, this was resolved timely)

In agreement with the Departmental internal review board and all senior authors listed in this particular paper, we would request a withdrawal of this paper from the journal publication list with immediate effect. However, we welcome your advice and we will be guided by you as to how best to proceed in relation to correcting the published research in PubMed and other relevant databases.

Finally, we would like to reiterate that this paper is fundamentally flawed requiring complex statistical analysis, which we do not feel is worthwhile at this particular stage.

Apologies for the inconveniences!

Many thanks in advance.

Kind regards,

Zubair

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Whelan Curtin, Declan

From: Kabir, Zubair
Sent: 08 October 2018 14:37
To: Whelan Curtin, Declan
Cc: Perry, Ivan
Subject: FW: Olurotimi Bankoke Ajake PhD candidate and PLOS ONE paper
Attachments: PhD evaluation_Timi_2015_second_2.doc; Report on meeting with Olurotimi Bankoke Ajakbe on Wednesday 17th June 2015 Final.docx

Importance: High

FYI.
 Zubair

From: Perry, Ivan
Sent: 22 June 2015 12:07
To: Kabir, Zubair; Greiner, Birgit; 'Tony Fitzgerald'; toconnor@muh.ie
Subject: Olurotimi Bankoke Ajake PhD candidate and PLOS ONE paper
Importance: High

Dear Colleagues,

Further to our meeting on Wednesday 17th June, I attach the most recent Graduate Studies Board PhD evaluation report on this candidate and I have inserted below the text of my initial e-mail to the editor of the journal PLOS ONE. I attach also a brief report of our meeting with Olurotimi Bankoke Ajake on Wednesday 17th June.

Dear Dr Puebla,

Thank you for responding so quickly to my telephone query. Significant concerns were raised in relation to the statistical analyses and the overall quality of this paper at Olurotimi Bankoke Ajagbe's internal Department of Epidemiology & Public Health, PhD Review Board. The paper was submitted without prior approval and review by the senior authors. The work falls short of the standard required for PhD in our Department and in the opinion of the PhD review panel it is not at the level required for peer reviewed publication. An internal review of the paper and the submission process is now under way. We will revert to you with the outcome from this review, including the specific issues of concern in relation to the paper as soon as possible. We welcome your advice and we will be guided by you as to how best to proceed.

With best wishes,

Ivan

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Cork - One of **world's Top 10 Cities** to Visit in 2010 (*Lonely Planet 2010*)

Ireland - **top tourist destination** for 2011 (*Frommer's Travel Guide*)