

RESPONSE TO REVIEWER: ARTICLE 543515

Response to Reviewer 2 Comments

Open Review

- (x) I would not like to sign my review report
() I would like to sign my review report
English language and style
() Extensive editing of English language and style required
(x) Moderate English changes required
() English language and style are fine/minor spell check required
() I don't feel qualified to judge about the English language and style

	Yes	Can be improved	Must be improved	Not applicable
Does the introduction provide sufficient background and include all relevant references?	()	(x)	()	()
Is the research design appropriate?	(x)	()	()	()
Are the methods adequately described?	()	(x)	()	()
Are the results clearly presented?	()	(x)	()	()
Are the conclusions supported by the results?	()	(x)	()	()
Comments and Suggestions for Authors				

Reviewer comments and suggestions to the authors

The present manuscript describes the use of a mobile technology, named as MyMAFI as a tool for current practices for field investigation on food poisoning outbreak. Throughout this study, the authors compared the effectiveness of this newly technology with the standard paper - based format approach.

Next are some comments and suggestions that may be useful for improving this manuscript.

Point 1: Please check the punctuation and spaces in the text.

Response 1: Thank you for your comment. Punctuation and spaces have been checked and corrected accordingly.

Point 2: Check the text in terms of language, keeping a constant verbal tense.

Response 2: Thank you for your comment and concern. We have checked and made the necessary changes

Point 3: The novelty and the advantages of this study must be strongly supported. The authors must emphasize the news of it.

Response 3: Thank you for your comment and concern. We did consider your suggestion. We already added the related information (please refer: line 322-328)

“The utilisation of mobile apps for the surveillance of infectious diseases in Malaysia is a new area that should be explored. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study conducted to assess the effectiveness of a newly developed mobile app for field investigation of outbreak. Besides, the assessment of the effectiveness of the mobile app was done via a randomised cross-over trials, a powerful study design that can minimise the between individuals variability and hence the true impact of the mobile app on the study outcome which is the timeliness in reporting can be exclusively evaluated.”

Point 4: Are the authors aware of other technological applications on this field?

Response 4: Thank you for your comment. We already added the related information (please refer: line 304-308)

“Another study which introduced the use of a mobile app known as AREA (A Mobile Application for Rapid Epidemiology Assessment) that was designed for epidemiology assessment revealed that the mobile app managed to facilitate rapid course of action and coordination of resources [25]. AREA can be used in situations such as public health crises or humanitarian crisis management, but it is not tailored for specific management of infectious disease outbreak.”

Point 5: The validation of final conclusions must be strongly emphasized with a broader discussion around this issue.

Response 5: Thank you for your comment. We did consider your suggestion. We already added the related information (please refer: line 357-365)

“This trial revealed that MyMAFI is effective as an alternative tool for field investigation of food poisoning outbreak as the time taken for reporting by using this mobile app was less than the conventional method. Nevertheless, its effectiveness during an actual outbreak is yet to be tested. In addition to that, even the reduction in reporting time was only around 30 minutes, there were other intangible advantages of using MyMAFI. It is a step forward towards paperless approach in public health surveillance and it could also reduce the workload of PHI as the current practices require them to do redundant tasks in manual data entry.”