Reviewer’s report

Title: Alcohol misuse, drinking contexts and intimate partner violence in St. Petersburg, Russia: Results from a cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: Joseph Ntaganira

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Overall, the paper is a good contribution to the body of literature on alcohol misuses and intimate partner violence (IPV) which could influence policy makers in Russia. I commend the authors on tackling such a sensitive topic.

Minor revisions

A. Abstract

Methods section:
– Add the place where participants were recruited from: …among 440 participants, recruited…

B. Introduction

1. Second paragraph: It would be interesting to add information on the prevalence of IPV in Russia before your third paragraph showing the association between alcohol and IPV. What is the situation in Russia? Are there previous studies conducted in Russia?

C. Methods

1. Study participants and data collection
– Provide a short description of the study setting (STI clinic center in St. Petersburg): is it the only center in the city? Does this center receive a particular/specific population such as marginalized people?
– Provide information on the sample size: how did you come up with the need for 500 participants? The clinic provides services to ~3000-5000 patients annually but for the period June 2008-June 2009, you recruited ~500 participants! What were the selection criteria? Did you select all the adults (> 18 years) who visited the clinic during the study period? What is the proportion of participants when compared to the total number of patients who visited the clinic during the study period?

D. Results

1. Characteristics and behaviors
– Although this paper is on IPV, authors don’t seem to give importance to the magnitude of IPV in this paragraph: What is the prevalence of IPV in your
population (in the text)? Was it similar according to gender? When do you consider that a participant is a victim of IPV? What is your case definition of IPV in the bivariate or multivariate analysis?

– Provide information on why you took 15,000 rubles as a limit.
– Give the equivalent in USD (in brackets).
– Table 1 (bottom): The mean and median ages for participants were 28.4 and 25.0 years, respectively (???)

2. Alcohol misuses and IPV
– Other variables are analyzed in this section and not only “alcohol misuses”. The title should change (Correlates??).
– Same comment for table 2.

3. Drinking context and IPV
– Second paragraph: ….Accordingly, the adjusted odds ratios….
– Second paragraph: ….Age, gender, education and employment status were not independently significantly associated…… (Data not shown).

E. Discussion
– 1st paragraph: “The present study provides new evidence….suggesting that violence against men should not be neglected.” What was the prevalence of IPV by gender? Is it similar to findings in other settings in Russia?
– 2nd Paragraph: “In this present study, we found that alcohol misuse was significantly associated with IPV in a typical city of Russia.” Are these findings from one clinic generalizable to the whole city? Authors should be cautious while making inferences because this center is an STI clinic, with specific clients…
– In the last section, authors discuss limitations of this study conducted in a STI clinic. I wonder whether HIV/AIDS might have a role in the explanation of drinking habits and settings and the consequence with regards to IPV. It has been shown that HIV/AIDS is associated to IPV. Have you analyzed this aspect in your study? Is drinking on the streets or at parks associated with particular behaviors such as drug abuse and HIV infection?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests.