Reviewer's report

Title: Awareness of breast cancer among adolescent schoolgirls in Colombo, Sri Lanka: a cross-sectional cohort study

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Reviewer: Ali Montazeri

Reviewer's report:

This is a straightforward study of awareness of breast cancer among adolescent schoolgirls in Colombo, Sri Lanka. In general the manuscript reads well. However, the following shortcomings should be dealt with:

1. The title should be changed to: Awareness of breast cancer among young adolescent girls (instead of schoolgirls) in ....

2. In the Background the authors reported that Breast cancer accounts for 26% of all cancer in females aged 15-39 years and 39% of all cancer in the 35-39 year age group. Breast cancer is generally more aggressive in younger age groups, with lower survival rates[10].

Are these statistics from reference 10? I feel reporting an age group 15-39 and then 35-39 are misleading and for instance it should be less than <20 and then 20 and higher.

3. The most important issue relating to this manuscript relies on the fact that the respondents are aged 17 to 19. There is no enough justification for why we should ask these young group students about breast cancer while we know that the risk for this group is very low? or why we should study breast cancer among this group, why they do breast self-examination while the recommended age is 20 and so on. These are fundamental issues both from ethical point of view and from scientific merits of the topic. The authors are recommended to clearly indicate why they performed this study and why such information should be published. In fact we need to see clear objectives for the study with obvious justifications. Otherwise I am afraid to say I am not in favor of publishing such papers!

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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'.