Reviewer's report

Title: Determinant factors of Age at first sexual initiation among youths in South West, Ethiopia: A cross sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 22 December 2012

Reviewer: Olufunmilayo Fawole

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for asking me to review the manuscript titled “Determinant Factors of Age at First Sexual Initiation Among Youths in South West, Ethiopia: “A cross sectional study.” This study was a health facility based cross sectional survey of 405 young people which aimed to identify factors associated with early sexual initiation among the youths. The study contributes to knowledge on adolescent sexuality in Ethiopia, however it will require the corrections listed below to improve the quality of the work.

1) Abstract
Should be more concise. Delete irrelevancies in the Background and Methods Sections. Bring first line of the Result Section to the Methods. Concluding part of abstract recommends teaching the community, school teachers, parents. This is not an outcome of this study. Recommendations should be related to the study.

2) Background
The first two paragraphs can be merged. The first line of the second paragraphs states young people are “particularly” vulnerable”. Authors should state to what? In the 3rd paragraph please put years behind the ages listed. Please give me more information, include the median /mean age, and show the trends in age of sexual initiation between year 2000 and 2005.

First sentence of the forth paragraph needs to be backed up with a reference. This is also probably due to cultural factors.

3) Methods
What does SNNPR mean?
There is no description of the study area “Gamo Gofa.”
Do all 3 hospitals and 68 health centres offer HIV testing and counseling services? How many actually do?

Selecting 3 health facilities out of 71 does not appear to be representative or scientific. It much too small.
Change “customers” to ‘clients’
What do you mean by “unable to communicate”? 
Please give number of data collectors and supervisors used in the study
Give more information on the content of the training, by whom? Over how many days? Quality control?
Ethical consideration not detailed enough – No information on anonymity, privacy, confidentiality etc.

(4) Results
Recast most of the sentences where numbers and percentages were used. Sentences should still flow even with use of numbers and percentages in the bracket. Use of bracket not well done.
Convert Ethiopian birr to USD.
In the text, please state what percentage of the students were in secondary or tertiary education.
In the methods, please provide your operational definition for terms such as “planned sex”, “alcohol use” and “comprehensive knowledge on HIV”

Write Result section in past tense.
In Table 3 please include percentages beside number given e.g 72, 66 etc.

(5) Discussion
Discussion repeats results stated in the Result Section. Many references are missing e.g. 2nd sentence of 1st paragraph, 2nd sentence of 2nd paragraph, last line of 3rd paragraph. Limitations should be recast.
What is the more representative sample of youths you will recommend?
Youth friendly centres may be recommended for those who are sexually active.

(6) References
Please list surname and initials only. References 8, 9 and 10 have first names. Journal name of reference 7 is not abbreviated.

Thank you.

Dr. O.I. Fawole