Reviewer’s report

Title: Experience of physical violence and mental health among young men and women: A population-based study in Sweden

Version: 1 Date: 8 July 2013

Reviewer: Olufunmilayo Fawole

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The aim of the study was to investigate the association between experience of physical violence during the past year and self rated psychological health among young men and women in Sweden. The study was a secondary data analysis of the 2008 public health survey in Skåne. Study population were 2,624 men and 3,569 women aged between 18-34 years.

The study is interesting and adds to the body of knowledge on the mental health consequences of experience of violence.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? Yes
2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? Yes
3. Are the data sound? yes they are sound
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? Yes the study is well reported
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? Yes, suggestion have also being given below
6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes additions have being made below
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? yes and these are referenced
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? Yes
9. Is the writing acceptable? Yes

However the following comments will help to improve upon the quality of the work-

1. Contact information: correct the spelling of ‘address’.
2. Abstract- The objective of the study is repeated again in the Methods section of the abstract. This can be replaced with information on sampling procedures or other methodological information. Also instead of repeating results in the Conclusion section, the last two sentences can be replaced with a recommendation.
3. Background – Should be written in past tense. The studies referred to were in
the past and situation may have changed. ‘Is’ should be changed to ‘was’ and ‘have’ to ‘had’.

In the first paragraph of page 5, give the references of the few population studies. What mental health assessment method did these studies use? How is the GHQ-12 an improvement to the other tools used in those studies?

Change ‘moreover’ to ‘also or in addition’

4. Methods - Please provide some information on the sampling technique and data collection in the primary survey.

Mention upfront that this is a secondary data analysis.

First paragraph of the Methods should be written in past tense. The survey has been conducted.

How was the decision made to denote respondents as “poor” if three or more of the twelve items psychological health was denoted as poor.

Some sentences should be in past tense, for example 2nd to the last line of page 7.

7. Alcohol ‘is’ defined to be change to alcohol ‘was’ defined.

To the question, have you ever been exposed to physical violence? Will all respondents have understood what physical violence is?

5. Results- reference is made to table 3 before table 2 (last line of paragraph 1 of the discussion). This should be deleted especially since it is mentioned again later on.

6. Discussion- Discuss the relationship between socio economic status and poor psychological health and the relationship between socio economic disadvantage and experience of violence.

Why is abuse against men highly prevalent in Sweden? Will be good to give readers some idea about this.

The fact that women may are less able to protect/defend themselves against perpetrators and often have concerns on how to protect their children (including having more concerns on finance and survival) should be explored and discussed as possible reasons for doubling of self reported psychological health among women and not men.

As part of the limitations there are other factors apart from violence which may have contributed to poor psychological health in respondents (emotional distress due to demise of loved ones or relationship problems etc) in the last one year which were not explored. These should be acknowledged.

References- Some journal names are abbreviated while some are written in full. Example- references 6 and 19. Check all other references to ensure consistency.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare i have no competing interests.