Author’s response to reviews

Title: Sexual assault in Lagos, Nigeria: a five year retrospective review.

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Re: Sexual assault in Lagos, Nigeria: a five year retrospective review

Thank you for facilitating the peer review of the above named manuscript.

The corrections suggested by all reviewers have been implemented.

Please find below a point by point response to individual reviewers.

Response to Reviewer Heidi Resnick’s report

On page 2 and other places where it occurs, data has been re-written with “were”

On page 3, the definition of rape or suspected cases has been so revised to exclude other types of sexual assaults.

The incidence has been explicitly stated as in only those reporting to the hospital with a sexual assault or suspected sexual assault

As of the time of conducting this study, there was no sexual assault program in LASUTH. However, at present there is a non-governmental sexual assault response centre that operates from within the hospital.

Women self-present to the hospital following a sexual assault and it is at this
point that a woman is determined to be recently sexually assaulted. This is not done at regular obstetric or gynaecology visits.

Although there is no treatment protocol in place, a description of the process of evaluating victims as of the time of this review has been included.

There was no documentation that forensic evidence was obtained in all the case records reviewed. The hospital lacked rape kits and facility for DNA analysis.

Factors such as puberty and time interval have been controlled for. Reports on the percentages of those eligible who received the services have been included. Additional citations have been included.

Response to Reviewer Olufunmilayo Fawole's report:

1. Abstract - 'More especially so in the Lagos State Teaching Hospital' and 'overall' in the 1st paragraph have been deleted.

2. Introduction – References have been sited to the following:-

Page 3 last line

Page 4, 2nd paragraph “True incidences are ……………”

Page 4, last line

Page 5, 1st paragraph “Lagos like other cities………..”

3. Methods - More information has been provided on the LASUTH in terms of number of beds and doctors. There is no written hospital protocol or guidelines for managing sexual assault. However the process has been described.

Reference has been inserted in the last line of the subtitle “Setting”

Cases identification and case definition of sexual assault have been duly inserted.

In the analysis section mention has been made of bivariate (inferential) analysis which was actually done.
Confidentiality issues have been mentioned.

4. Results- Page 7, 3rd paragraph. For the students, the place of occurrence of the assault has been included.

Page 8, 1st line has been re-written with letters.

5. Discussion- Page 8 last line, underreporting has been discussed.

Page 9, 1st paragraph, “Children 10 years and other victim” is a report of our findings and this has been stated explicitly.

Reference has been included for the following;

1st two lines of page 10 and second paragraph of page 10 “An official report to the police….”

1st two lines of page 11 “The recommendation is that ……”

The last paragraph of the discussion.

Limitations of the study have been discussed.

6. Figures.

Figure 1 title has been included in the figure legend in the main manuscript as directed in 'instructions for authors' and figure two has been deleted.

Response to Reviewer Esther O Asekun-Olarinmoye's report

1. Major Compulsory Revisions:

a. A table to show victims’ socio-demographic characteristics i.e. age-group, occupation, has been included. This was a gynaecology unit- based study. Hence, only the female gender was included.

b. The data for the bivariate analysis used for the statistical test of significance for rape during the day versus teenagers and non-teenagers have been included.
c. The omission of a decimal point has been corrected. However the calculated p value was $p=0.000000$ but this has been reported as $p<0.001$ as advised.

d. Inferences drawn from results have been clearly stated and discussed as regards means of reducing the overall incidence of rape.

e. The major limitations of the study have been discussed.

2. Minor Essential Revisions:

a. Background section: Additional references have been supplied

b. Results section:

i. Paragraph 4, the figure has been spelt out completely

ii. Paragraph 5, the sentence has been re-written.

c. Discussion section:

i. The prevalence of 0.76% has been defined as prevalence among hospital gynaecological consultations for the period under review

ii. Paragraph 1, consistency concerning incidence has been maintained.

The figure quoted has been corrected to 0.76%.

iii. Paragraph 3, ‘children 10yrs and < were actually almost 50%’ has been corrected to 40%.

d. Figures and Tables:

i. Figure 1 title has been included in the figure legend in the main manuscript as directed in 'instructions for authors'. X and Y axis have been labeled.

iii. Table 2, now table 3 has been arranged in descending order.
Yours sincerely,

Akinlusi Fatimat M.