Reviewer's report

Title: Characteristics of sexual violence against adolescent girls and adult women

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Reviewer: Lydia O'Donnell

Reviewer's report:

The article focuses on the important issue of sexual violence. Using surveillance data from 1994-99, patterns of violence are characterized, comparing victimization of female adolescents and adults. It is difficult to determine whether the findings are unique and informative without more information on what other reports (if any) on similar populations have been published. A clearer statement of contribution to the field is needed, along with acknowledgement of the fact that the data used are from about 15 years ago. At minimum, there needs to be some discussion of whether the numbers of youth/women reporting violence overall has significantly changed (as might be the case if stigma about reporting has been reduced--overall, or for certain segments, e.g., acquaintance rape, child rape).

In addition to the need to place the study more in context of what else is known/has been published, there are some writing and structural issues. Copyediting to address English translation issues is needed. The discussion section reports on the data--this information should be moved to results. The discussion then needs to underscore what findings are new as well as limitations of the data. Are there more recent data available? Might some patterns--like use of condoms--be different today? What about differences in reporting over time?

These weaknesses in the current manuscript are significant and need to be addressed in a revision; thus, they are compulsory changes.

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

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

Declaration of competing interests:

No competing interests