Reviewer's report

Title: Premarital Sexual Practices and its Predictors among in-School youths in Shendi Town, West Gojjam Zone, North Western Ethiopia

Version: 1 Date: 14 December 2013

Reviewer: Tizta Tilahun

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Comments to Authors
This paper is while interesting but not adequately written.
The followings are Some of my comments and questions for further clarification.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Abstract
Method: How did you conduct multistage sampling technique
Conclusion: The first sentences appears as in the result section rather than conclusion.
- The sentence “Therefore, an integrated effort needs to be initiated through school-based information, education, and behavioural…. “ – the word integration….how it could be implemented?

Methods
- Why you used P-value from Malaysia while there are studies conducted in Ethiopia and these studies showed us the prevalence the problem among youths? You also put the prevalence of premarital sex in the case of Ethiopia from EDHS in the discussion section?

Results
- This paper has an important message but my major comment for this section is lack of clarity in writing sentences.
- First of all I wonder why you put qualitative and quantitative results separately? Do you think the way you put qualitative and quantitative findings separately gives more comfort to the reader? I would rather suggest triangulation of both findings.

Discussion
- I would suggest this part should be revised in the way discussion should be written rather than just placed as the sentences in the results part.
- Qualitative findings engaged in quotation instead of being synthesised in the approach of triangulation, however this should not be modified.

Minor Essential Revisions
Abstract

Background: It should have a figure(number) which show the extent of the problem in the case of the study area.

Methods: The mean (+/-SD) – Do you think it is necessary to put it

Background

- Some ideas written in the paragraphs did not have source/references. Example paragraph two and four page one.
- What do mean by not dealt in-depth?? To what extent of depth you conducted this study. How you come up with this conclusion?

Methods

- Adequate training was given for data collectors? What do you mean by it, what were the components of the training.
- You did not reason out why you conducted four focused group discussions? More elaborations in similar way as quantitative part described.

Results

- Editorial works should be done like (table 1) rather it should be (Table 1), the same for figures.
- Rewrite the sentence “Occupationally most respondents’ fathers 646 (86.8%) were farmers while 418 (53%) and 323 (41%) of their mothers were farmers and housewives, respectively.” It is vague to understand.
- In the multivariate analysis being youth age and living arrangement showed an association. What do you mean by youth age??? Age group and also similar question to living arrangement? You should put it in understandable way.
- What is the basic characteristics of the discussant, at least sex and age should be explained in bracket. This could help the reader to take easily the home message.

Discussion

- In some cases, such as paragraph four page eight, there are points which give the impression of comparison with other studies but no there is no any reference/citation given.
- What do you mean by BSS? Not open for the reader?
- Likewise, in the last paragraph of the discussion section the whole idea presentation is truly of the result section and put directly as the participant in the discussion pointed. May I suggest you to refer back what result and discussion have written styles.

Limitation

- Using sample size calculation you get 851 and from it 826 response, but in the limitation part you said due to the sample size it makes difficult to determine some of the important predictors. Do you think your sample size is not enough to conclude? Why? What type of predictors need more than 826 sample size to be
explained? As far as I understand in several studies which employed self-responded questionnaires getting 826 response is a huge advantage. How did you look it?

- Concerning figure one; the take home message could be large share of the respondents used alcohol. May be just describing in words could be possible than having pie-chart.

- Finally authors should be more aware about the numbers and percentages in the tables! In some of the rows the sum is greater than 100 (table one and two).

Discretionary Revisions

- Language editing should be done thoroughly.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**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