Reviewer's report

Title: Adolescent - Parent Communication on Sexual and Reproductive Health Issues among High School Students in Dire Dawa, Eastern Ethiopia: A Cross Sectional Study

Version: Date: 5 March 2014

Reviewer: Augustine Ankomah

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Major compulsory Revisions:

Introduction:
1. The question being addressed in this paper is not clearly defined. The issue is embedded in the second and third paragraphs of the introduction. The authors must clearly state the research question or the hypothesis being tested in a coherent manner.

2. Paragraph 2: The link between Ethiopian national reproductive health strategy, the establishment of, and utilization youth friendly services and parent-adolescent communication about sexuality is not clearly established. Link these issues.

3. Paragraph 3: state clearly how parent-child sexual communication help in addressing the MDGs 3 4, 5, and 6. Also state the goals; for example, MDG goal 3 (promote gender equality and empower women)

Methods:
4. The authors need to provide a bit more details about the sampling procedure

5. How many high schools are in the Dire Dawa administrative council area? Out of the total number of high schools, how many were selected into the sample?

6. State the total population of the schools selected

7. The multi-stage sampling technique employed in this study needs elaboration. The authors must specify what was selected at the 1st stage, 2nd stage, etc.

8. If proportional sampling was applied to the strata, (which is the 4 grades (9th, 10th, 11th, 12th), did you really use simple random samplings or systematic sampling? Check and report appropriately.

9. How many day students participated and how were their parents selected for FGD? Exactly how many parents of day students involved in the FDG? Why were FGDs restricted to only parents of day-school students?
10. The questionnaires were translated from English to Amharic. Did you do an independent back translation from Amharic to English to ensure that there was no change in the meaning of the questions and responses?

Communication on sexual and reproductive health issues:
11. What was the basis for using 2 topics to define ever discussed sexual and reproductive health issue?

Discussion:
12. How many sexual topics did the authors assess in this study? It will be helpful to provide data relating to the topics. If specific topics were not studied, then the authors should discuss it in the context of Bastein and colleagues findings (Ref 17), thus paragraph 3 of discussion, line 7 … to end must be deleted.
13. The qualitative text must be written well to convey the exact ideas they are intended to represent.

Minor Essential Revisions
Data processing and statistical analysis:
14. Line 2: “Descriptive statistical analysis was used”. Descriptive statistics about what? The authors must explain what this sentence means.

Ethical considerations:
15. The study was conducted among young people 13-24 years. Particularly for minors (adolescents 13-17 years of age), how did the authors obtain consent among this group? Parental consent and minors’ ascent are crucial.

Results:
16. First sentence – if response rate was 92%, the authors must indicate the actual sample use for data analysis
17. Paragraph 1 line 7, delete “during the study period”
18. Table 1: Age 10-14 must come before 15-19. Also under religion, align the various religions with their respective frequencies
19. Study sample is aged 15-24 but mean age of respondents is restricted to 15-19 year olds. Consider entire sample.

Knowledge, sexual attitude and behaviour…:
20. Paragraph 1, 5th and 6th lines… Students reported unwanted pregnancy… the whole sentence is not clear. The authors must clarify the sentence.
21. Paragraph 2 lines 2 and 3; the sentence is not clear. Also the percentages provided for male and female use of condom at first are misleading. Check the denominator and compute the rates again.
22. The authors need to use counts to present result where the numbers are few. For example, Paragraph 2 lines 5 and 6, the percentages should be computed again or present the raw counts: 90 out of … and 70 out of …
23. The report of sexual activity/behaviour is not conventional. It’s unclear how sexual debut was measured. E.g. what is the meaning of …57.6% of female students strongly disagreed on having on having pre-marital sex’. This attitudinal question cannot be used to measure the proportion ever engaged in sex (behaviour).

24. Some of the references were not properly cited. For example Ref 7, the article was published 2009 in the Bulletin of the WHO, but the authors state just WHO and publication date as 2010. Please check.

Discretionary Revisions:
25. The authors need to discuss their finding in the context of local studies or African-based studies since Ethiopia may share similar culture with other African countries. Direct comparison across different cultures may present some difficulties. They might, for example, consider reading the work of Tesso et al. 2012 (see http://www.reproductive-health-journal.com/content/9/1/13) and other related works in Africa.

Recommendations:
Language:
The whole paper needs a thorough grammatical review to fix omissions, sentence construction, punctuations, tenses, inappropriate usage etc.

Overall assessment of the manuscript:
Unable to decide on the acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Quality of written English:
Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited (see my recommendation)

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

Declaration of competing interests:

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**
No