Reviewer's report

Title: VIOLENCE AND DEPRESSION AMONG MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN IN TANZANIA

Version: 0 Date: 07 Jul 2016

Reviewer: Loraine Bacchus

Reviewer's report:

Overall this is an interesting manuscript on an important and under researched topic, particularly in the context of Tanzania. However, I have several concerns which are outlined below. In its current state, the manuscript lacks clarity and more work is needed to turn this into a manuscript that is ready for submission.

Background

Here you cite studies for the prevalence of various forms of violence, yet you do not separate out violence perpetrated by partners (intimate partner violence - IPV) from violence carried out by non-partners. Some of the studies you cite relate to IPV (e.g. Stephenson & Finneran, Houston & McKiman, etc). What is 'moral abuse' mentioned in line 39? When you refer to participants in the 'high-violence level group' in line 46 - what are you referring to here. The text on rates of depression is repetitious at times and could be better organised. You state that the study by Ahaneku et al (2016) has a prevalence that is much closer to two South African studies. Where was Akaneku's study conducted and why are you making this comparison? The background seems to present a lot of prevalence data, without any rationale. At the end of the background section you state that the study will provide information for key stakeholders to improve health in key populations including MSM. How can your findings be extrapolated to other 'key populations'? On what basis are you making this assumption? Is it not the case, that your study has implications just for MSM?

Methodology

It is not clear where the study is taking place. Initially the health centre is mentioned, but then you refer to the use of RDS sampling and the interviews taking place at the TAPP offices, which I take is not a health centre. Did you ask the five eligible MSM to recruit other men from the health centre you mention or from within the community? If your sample is from a health clinic, then your findings might be relevant in the context of how health care services should respond to MSM who are exposed to violence. The description of the analysis is unclear. What is the dependent variable and what are the independent variables in the regression? What type of logistic regression did you use?
Results

Where you state that 90.1% of men had experienced violence in the past 12 months - is that any form of violence? Perhaps a table is needed for the prevalence figures by type of perpetrator. The odds ratios reported in the table and text for violence and depression are very wide. I would suggest talking to a statistician about these results as they are telling you something important about the precision of your estimates. These are overlooked in the limitations section.

Discussion

The first paragraph is dedicated to comparing your findings to prevalence estimates from other studies. Again, some of these are specifically about IPV - are you sure you are comparing like with like? On page 9 you refer to the "6-item logistic model'. You never state in the methods what variables were entered into the regression so we don't know which 6 items you are referring to.

The term 'violence naive' is not correct.

Conclusion

I thought this was stated rather weakly given the high prevalence of violence and association between violence and depression. What about the potential role of health care? There is a broader literature that could help you to contextualise your findings. Also, are there any available resources for MSM who are subjected to violence in Tanzania?

I wish the authors the best of luck in revising their manuscript.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal