Reviewer's report

Title: Consumption and drinking pattern of alcoholic beverages among women in Ghana: A cross-sectional study

Version: 3 Date: 8 December 2014

Reviewer: Priscilla Martinez

Reviewer's report:

The authors did well to respond to reviewer concerns.

My main concern with the revised manuscript is the labeling of the main outcome variables, and the interpretation of results. Also, the authors make no reference to findings of the 2008 Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (GDHS) reported by the Ghana Statistical Service and the Ghana Health Service in 2009.

I am concerned about considering the outcome variable for "alcohol consumption" to represent any lifetime use. As the authors state, no timeframe was given for this variable, and to interpret it as meaning whether or not women have ever consumed any alcohol is subject to several problems. First, because no specific timeframe was specified, different people will interpret the question differently, giving way to greater heterogeneity within people who respond to the question and likelihood for misclassification. Second, because the implication of the question is about current use, it seems like to poor practice to assume that it could represent lifetime consumption. Third, the prevalence estimate it produces is notably lower than other estimates of any lifetime alcohol use, suggesting it does not actually measure lifetime alcohol consumption. Indeed, it is closer to estimates of past-week and past-month use.

Similarly, I have concerns with the drinking pattern outcome variable. Drinking pattern is understood as a composite of frequency and quantity over time. That the variable employed in this analysis only includes frequency is limiting and falls short of meeting the definition of a drinking pattern. To be clear and transparent, I think it would be most accurate to call it "past-week drinking frequency" instead of drinking pattern. It's also important to acknowledge the lack of any quantity measure.

While the interpretations are generally sound, there seems to be a tendency to overstate the results. Indeed this work shows there is variety in frequency of past-week consumption among Ghanian women, but generally use is low and moderate. So stating that moderate use needs to be taught seems redundant, and rather the maintenance of moderate use seems to be necessitated. Relatedly, the authors will make statements saying that "most" women are high consumers, when referring to a 37% rate of use among women from a certain region, and this is closer to a third than over a half. Also, much of what is reported here is also reported in the 2009 report on the Ghana 2008 DHS, and...
yet no references are made to this work, either in terms of how the results are similar and how the analysis in this paper extends that knowledge.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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.