Reviewer’s report

Title: Knowledge and Attitude towards Rape and Child Sexual Abuse - a community-based cross-sectional study in Rural Tanzania

Version: 3 Date: 8 November 2014

Reviewer: Charles Amnon Sunday Karamagi

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To: The Editor-in-Chief, BMC Public Health
Re: Review of manuscript by Charles Karamagi, 8 November 2014

Title of manuscript:
Knowledge and Attitude towards Rape and Child Sexual Abuse – a community-based cross-sectional study in Rural Tanzania by Muzdalifat Abeid, Projestine Muganyizi, Siriel Massawe, Rose Mpembeni, Elisabeth Darj, Pia Axemo.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
Yes. This was a community-based cross sectional study on knowledge and attitude towards rape and child sexual abuse in rural Tanzania. This is an important topic with a broad range of health and human rights issues.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
No.

Background/References
This section and particularly the references need up-dating. Include references particularly from the region. These will be useful when making comparisons in the discussion. (major)

Methods
In the setting, state the literacy rate for males and females. (minor)
The methods are not explicit on how confidentiality was ensured during the interviews. (minor)
Since rape and child sexual abuse are sensitive subjects, how was the safety of the interviewers ensured, especially since most of them were women? (minor)
In the analysis, the authors do not state whether they adjusted for the design effect since they used a multi-stage sampling procedure. (major)

3. Are the data sound?
No
Since there were two dependent variables i.e. 1) knowledge on sexual violence and its associated factors, and 2) attitudes to sexual violence and its associated factors, it is reasonable to expect that the results section will be organised in a similar manner for purposes of clarity. (major)

Table 5
This table is difficult to interpret. You need to add a column for knowledge on sexual violence (good) to the right of the Number column. (major)

Table 6
This table is also difficult to interpret. Add a column for attitude towards sexual violence (non-accepting) to the right of the Number column. (major)

4. Do the figures appear to be genuine, i.e. without evidence of manipulation?
Yes

5. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes

6. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
No

Discussion
This section needs re-organization just like the results section. As it is, the discussion jumps back and forth between knowledge on sexual violence and attitudes which obscures the clarity of the messages. The discussion has focussed on some of the results and left out other results – all the results should be discussed. The depth of the discussion also needs improvement. Comparisons particularly with regional studies
need to be made and explanations given for any differences found. (major)

Conclusions
As stated above, go beyond the results and state the implications of the findings of the study. (major)

7. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
Partly

Strengths and limitations
Among the strengths you should also include the large sample, population based study, random sampling methods, and high response rate. Among the limitations, you should also include the sensitive nature of the subject that is often associated with shame, and how this could have influenced your results. Also, what did you do to minimize the effect of these limitations? (minor)

8. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
Yes. As stated earlier, update the references particularly with comparable work from the region. (major)

9. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
No.
In the conclusion, the statement “Knowledge and attitude towards sexual violence is correlated with sociodemographic characteristics” is vague. Be specific. Secondly, go beyond the results and state the implications of these findings. (major)

10. Is the writing acceptable?
Yes, though there are some minor corrections. (minor)

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**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