Reviewer’s report

Title: Workplace sexual harassment and depressive symptoms: a cross-sectional multilevel analysis comparing harassment from clients or customers to harassment from other employees amongst 7603 Danish employees from 1041 organizations

Version: 0 Date: 16 Jan 2017

Reviewer: Allison Milner

Reviewer’s report:

Thanks for submitting this manuscript. It was very interesting. I hope my comments below are helpful.

* Introduction - The background section starts to discuss issues that belong under the heading below, pleased correct this mistake.

* I think the authors need to more clearly define what they mean by person specific occupations, where sexual harassment from clients is likely to occur. I was thinking of only two, the medical profession and sex work. This created a problem for me throughout. I can see you have presented the occupations affected in an appendix. Please also discuss in text too. This needs to be mentioned in the abstract.

* Page 4, para 2- I find it hard to understand how there could be problems in distinguishing between inappropriate sexual behaviour from clients and work related responsibilities. Surely, if the behaviour corresponds to the definition on page 3 and the worker feels uncomfortable then it is clearly a problem. Please do provide me with some more information to convince me of your argument.

* Also, page 8, there needs to be a justification of why these organisational level variables are relevant. E.g. How would sickness absence influence both exposure and outcome?

* Figure 1 and page 6- there appears to be quit a lot of drop out in both data sources. I realise that the nature of the study topic means that it is not relevant to all people or workplaces in the sample. It would helpful if the authors would include an overall response rate and comment on the drop out and sample selection in the limitations of the paper. I think there is a need to comment on the fact that the exposure is not highly prevalent in all occupations.

* Methods- sensitivity analysis mentioned with care workers only. What is the motivation for this? hypothesis needed for this

* More detail needed on interaction tests. E.g. Likelihood ratio and interaction term used to assess statistical significance?
Results - pg 11 - this is based on a very small number of people. It would be good to comment on this in the discussion. Again, please provide a greater explanation of what 'care work' is. Please comment on organisational level variables.

Results - page 22 and table 3 - interesting that the results for sexual harassment from colleagues is greater than that from clients. Although I acknowledge they are not likely to be significantly different from one another as the confident intervals cross over. Also it is perhaps unsurprising that the organisational level workplace characteristics is not significant. This is perhaps a reflection of the fact that they are maybe non-relevant to the key research exposures?

Please also include the main effects for the workplace characteristics. Were any significant on their own?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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.

Yes

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

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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