Reviewer’s report

Title: Gender-based violence and engagement in biomedical HIV prevention, care and treatment: A scoping review

Version: 0 Date: 01 Mar 2019

Reviewer: Amina Alio

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript titled "Gender-based violence and engagement in biomedical HIV prevention, care and treatment: A scoping review." The authors conducted a scoping review on the target phenomenon based on the methodological framework established by Arksey and O'Malley (2005). Their scoping search began with a preliminary pool consisting on nearly 500 studies, which was subsequently whittled down to about 50 studies based on well-defined exclusion criteria.

Methods:

The authors referenced the scoping framework (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005) on several occasions throughout this manuscript. One minor revision I would suggest is to elaborate on the concept of gender-based violence discussed throughout the manuscript. Given the complexity/multi-dimensionality and nuances of this construct, I think it would be helpful to provide a brief overview on GBV, especially to readers who are familiar with the general public health literature who may be less aware of issues surrounding GBV (currently, the manuscript provides a definition of GBV as "physical, sexual, emotional violence"). Some of these nuances are already recorded in the "Findings" column in Table 2, so the authors would not have to go back to the 50+ papers to re-abstract details regarding GBV.

Inclusion of necessary controls:

Given the scoping nature of this literature review type of manuscript, controls (either in terms of statistical or conceptual) were not needed to be implemented. The authors' goals did not seek to provide a summary or composite effect estimate.

Conclusions drawn adequate:

Since this is a scoping review, the intent was to "map" the literature relevant to the target phenomenon. The conclusion section provided a synthesis of the extant research evidence, though perhaps the most important function of this section was to introduce the key concepts (at the risk of being repetitive, I would like the authors to elaborate on the GBV concept), gaps of
knowledge, and types/sources of evidence about the relationship between GBV and engagement in the HIV care continuum.

Quality of written English:

The writing was concise, organized, and clear.

Quality of language in the manuscript:

The authors used standard American English and presented their ideas and findings in a coherent and organized manner. Word and grammatical usage were reasonable and facilitated new understanding about this phenomenon.

**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.

Unable to assess

**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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Acceptable

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