Reviewer's report

Title: Gender Disparities of Chronic Musculoskeletal Disorder Burden in the Elderly Ghanaian Population: Study on Global Ageing and Adult Health (SAGE WAVE 1)

Version: 2 Date: 16 April 2015

Reviewer: Quinette Louw

Reviewer's report:

I enjoyed reading this well written paper.

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) Include the sampling method. Although a reference is required, a brief description is required.

2) Information about the measurement tool is required- Development and psychometric properties

3) How valid was it to differentiate back pain from arthritis? Was this relation investigated?

4) Traumatic injuries were excluded? Did this pertain to acute injuries because chronic pain can ensue from traumatic injuries

5) Maybe the questionnaire should be included as an Appendix to understand how the outcome was measured? e.g. What was the definition of "back pain"?

Pain was classified as chronic if it was ongoing? How exactly was "ongoing" defined?

6) The outcomes must be clarified? e.g. was the answer indicated as "diagnosed with arthritis " AND "treatment for arthritis or if the response was yes to one of these questions?

7) Explain why the recall period was 12 month for arthritis and 30 days for back pain.

Also, justify the selected recall periods.

8) Sometimes acute back pain has acute episodes-why were these cases excluded?

And, how was this determined?

9) We have recently reviewed all the studies published on back pain prevalence (in press) and found that the type of occupation/job was an important associated. I don’t understand why occupation was classified as informal/formal/private/public as it is more important whether the type of job is a confounder.

10) About 50% of the sample was not in any form of employment (?pensioner); why was this category not considered as a covariate?
Minor Essential Revisions
none

Discretionary Revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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'