Reviewer’s report

Title: Prevalence and severity of menopause symptoms among perimenopausal and postmenopausal women aged 30-49 years in Gulele sub-city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Version: 0 Date: 06 Jul 2016

Reviewer: Nese Yuksel

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the manuscript "Prevalence and severity of menopause symptoms among perimenopausal and postmenopausal women aged 30-49 years in Gulele sub-city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia". In this manuscript the authors describe a cross-sectional survey to assess the prevalence and severity of menopausal symptoms in peri and postmenopausal women in Ethiopia. The authors indicate that this is the first study on the experiences of menopausal women in Ethiopia.

Overall the manuscript is well written. I have several suggestions that may assist the authors with further revisions.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Background:

P4, line 13-14 - Definitions of perimenopause and premenopause in the background are not consistent with current definitions (ie premenopause is defined as prior the change in menstrual cycle, not the "one or two years preceding menopause", perimenopause refers to the time where irregularities in menstrual cycle are seen with symptoms). Suggest following the STRAW definitions for consistency. Harlow et al. Menopause 2012;19(4):119.

Methods:

Study selection and subjects: More details on subject recruitment would be helpful. For example how was the information about the study population obtained (ie how were ages available, how were the women identified)? How were the women contacted?

Was there any other exclusion criteria? For example did you exclude women with certain medical conditions (for example breast cancer, chronic diseases such as renal/hepatic failure etc)? If not, was this information collected from the women (should be presented as part of the demographics).
Data collection instruments: Was use of hormone therapy or CHC asked as well? Was different medical conditions captured - especially ones that may add to symptoms (for example thyroid)? Was BMI/weight collected? Smoking status? This background data is important in interpreting the prevalence/severity of menopausal symptoms.

Results:

P9, Lines 7 - 15, Table 1: The following information would be helpful in this section: number of women with hysterectomy, breakdown of the iatrogenic causes as mentioned in methods (BSO, chemotherapy/radiation induced), smoking status, BMI if available, medical conditions that may have overlapping symptoms with menopause. All of this information is important in interpreting the presence and severity of menopausal symptoms.

Other information needed for postmenopausal women - age at menopause (ie LMP) and duration in menopause (for example number of years since LMP).

How was monthly income (wealth quintiles) decided? Should include how this was classified in methods.

Discussion:

P12, lines 15 -16: Where was the "age of 49 years" obtained - reference? Does the age of 49 years refer to both peri and postmenopausal women? Does it refer to the start of menopausal symptoms? It is difficult to compare the mean age in your study with this reference range without some idea of timeline since last LMP for postmenopausal women. The age of 40 years - is the mean age in your sample but may not represent the same thing as the reference range of "49 years".

P12 - 13 - It may be helpful to have information on HT use or other treatment options for menopausal symptoms. This will provide some context when interpreting the symptoms and severity reported. As well it would be helpful to have demographic information such as smoking status and other medical conditions to be able to interpret the findings.

Conclusion:

P14, Line 1 - "age of menopause was 40.1 years". Be cautious in indicating this as the age of menopause. This is the age of your sample, not the age of menopause.
Discretionary revisions:

Table 2: Much of the information in Table 2 is already in Table 3. Not sure if Table 2 is also needed. It could be removed.

Table 5 - why did you choose to present the data in this format versus the mean scores on the MRS scale?

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

No

**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.

No

**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

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

Acceptable

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