Reviewer's report

Title: Gender-based Violence Screening Methods Preferred by Women Visiting a Public Hospital in Pune, India.

Version: 0 Date: 27 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Anuradha Paranjape

Reviewer's report:

Please include all comments for the authors in this box rather than uploading your report as an attachment. Please only upload as attachments annotated versions of manuscripts, graphs, supporting materials or other aspects of your report which cannot be included in a text format.

My biggest concern with this paper is that the methods section is very brief and appears to omit details. It appears to be a convenience sample - how did the counselors decide which women to approach? It is certainly possible that there was selection bias. One example - if women were accompanied by a mother in law or other family members it is possible that such women were not interviewed.

Second, the definition of GBV is open to bias - since it is self reported and some women may not consider themselves to be abused, which is why the prevalence is lower (or incidence).

It is not clear if the study measures lifetime abuse, incident abuse or prevalence over a certain time frame.

Third- were any safety measures in place if ongoing abuse or escalating abuse was disclosed?

Since there are significant issues with the methods, I cannot really comment on the findings. The study was conducted before a paper that describes how well does the WHO definition of GBV work in an Indian context [5. Kalokhe, AS, Potdar RR, Stephenson, R, Dunkle, KL, Paranjape,A, del Rio C, Sahay,S, How well does the World Health Organization Definition of Domestic Violence Work for India? PLoS ONE, 2015; 10(3): e0120909. PMID [25811374]. Dr Kalokhe has also developed a scale to measure Family violence in an Indian context - and that definition is inclusive of acts of abuse where the perpetrator is an in-law. This study was conducted in Pune, India, which is where BJMC is located (full disclosure, I am co-I and I am a BJMC/Sassoon alumna).
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.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

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

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I have a vested interest in seeing this paper published since I trained at this institution and am well aware of the issue of GBV in India.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal