Reviewer’s report

Title: Sexual violence against female university students in Ethiopia

Version: 0 Date: 22 Sep 2016

Reviewer: Nikole Allen

Reviewer’s report:

Language: The English is generally correct, but could be polished with additional editing to make the sentence structure clearer and the grammar, adjective choice, verb tense and vocabulary more accurate throughout.

Background-

* There is a lot of data cited in the background, however, it is unclear if you are citing global statistics or Ethiopia specific. For example, "Rape only results in about 32,000 unwanted pregnancies each year." As a reader I would interpret this differently if it is globally, within East Africa, Ethiopia, Ethiopian universities, or in Woliata Zone etc.

Methods

* In the study design and area section, there is mention of the Woliata Sodo University Anti-HIV/AIDS club. IF this is considered an important factor for the study setting, additional informational resources for gender mainstreaming, sexual, health, and security resources on campus should be outlined. If this information is not nessecary for the data analysis, discussion or conclusions it can be removed.

* Please provide some additional detail about how were the students contacted, recruited etc.? The methods describe simple random sampling, was this using a list of female students provided by the university? Between random sampling to identify the students and the female students sitting in the classroom, what took place?

* Please include more description of the survey instrument use. The manuscript mentions that is was adapted from an existing tool. What process was used to adapt the survey? If this tool is similar to or the same as the survey used in other Ethiopia studies this could be stated.

* The survey is occasionally referred to as an "interview" this is miss leading, unless the students were in fact interviewed with an unstructured or structured approach.

Discussion
* The manuscript cites other studies in the discussion that were not mentioned in the background. Discussing these in the background, before the results, would help the reader to better understand and contextualize the results.

* WHO defines adolescents as 10 to 19 years of age. In the discussion, there is a lack of clarity when comparing previous Ethiopian studies in other universities and high schools where the age range of the study subjects may be significantly different. (http://www.who.int/topics/adolescent_health/en/). Consider adding the age range of women surveyed to the methods section.

* There is a large section dedicated to comparing the life time prevalence of completed rape in different countries (US, Costa Rica, etc). Why? Only include this data if you can tie it back into the original purpose of the study, if it illuminates the results described in your study setting, or directly informs the conclusion. Since there seem to be a number of studies on this topic in different regions of Ethiopia, I would suggest focusing on Ethiopia specific or comparable (university level) institutions when comparing the results with other studies. Further discussion and analysis of the available Ethiopian studies may lead to more specific recommendations or elucidate patterns.

**Conclusion**

In the study purpose and background the authors discuss the importance of creating a safe institutional environment for female students. "Therefore, determining the magnitude and identifying predictors' helps to design preventions and controlling strategies to tackle it. So the aim of this study was to assess sexual violence and associated factors among female students of Wolaita Sodo University." The conclusions drawn at the end of the paper are not specific to Wolaita Sodo University or based on any of the results discussed. I recommend further review of the analyzed results to identify less generalized recommendations.

**Tables**

Table 2—In the results you, "The mean age and SD for having the first sexual intercourse was found to be an 18.8±2.7 year which was roughly seven years less than the average age of their first sexual partner.", but that is not how the data is displayed in the table.

There is a line "willingness at first intercourse", by the definition provided above, this is rape. Correct? Please clarify in the table what this is representing.

Table 3-Title, "Frequency and tendency of reporting rape among female Students, 2015 (n=71)" may be misleading. Clarify, reporting rape on the survey questionnaire (versus reporting to family, police, institution, etc.).

**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.

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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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