Reviewer’s report

Title: Experiences of gender-based violence among female sex workers, men who have sex with men, and transgender women in Latin America and the Caribbean: a qualitative study to inform HIV programming

Version: 0 Date: 30 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Andrea Mantsios

Reviewer's report:

- This manuscript addresses the important topic of experiences of GBV among three different key populations across multiple countries in a region. Given how much there is to take in - multiple countries, multiple key populations, a great deal of data collected - I think it would be helpful to have one table providing an overview of how many interviews were conducted in each country among which KP groups and what domains/themes emerged in analysis across them.

- The participatory nature of the research makes a valuable contribution to the literature in that it is less common to see these methods carried out by KP peer data collectors - the methods are overall well described. It would have been helpful to get a sense of how the peer data collectors were trained and what measures were taken to ensure fidelity to the interview guide/procedures for consistency across the interviews. Further description would also have been helpful in understanding how the study team determined where the Haiti data fit within the body of data they collected given they differed so greatly.

- There were a couple of typos - pg 10, line 9 "in employment", pg 11 line 3 "in the all remaining", pg 17, line 12 - sentence ends with "the".

- I found it confusing to have the table numbers in the text skip around while supplemental tables with the intermittent numbers were included in the appendix (e.g. mention of table 3 followed by table 7). Perhaps this could be smoothed by simply a different numbering system (e.g. consecutive in text with all others consecutive in appendix). In terms of table design, I did not find the color-coded cells with n and % displayed within them totally intuitive, wondering if there might be another way to display this data.

- I thought having the limitations following the results broke the flow to the discussion section. Could limitations not be included in discussion instead?
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

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 declare that I have no competing interests.

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.