Reviewer’s report

Title: Near-death experiences, attacks by family members and absence of health care in their home countries affect the quality of life of refugee women in Germany - a multi-region cross-sectional gender-sensitive study

Version: 0 Date: 10 Sep 2017

Reviewer: Sverre Varvin

Reviewer’s report:

This is an important and well-researched paper. Six-hundred-sixty-three women from six countries (Afghanistan, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Somalia and Eritrea) living in shared reception facilities in five distinct German regions were interviewed by native speakers using a structured questionnaire.

This is one of the first large scale studies in connection with the great numbers of refugees that reached Europe in 2015 and 2016. The study gives a good picture of the situation of these women before, during and after flight and give important information on what determines their health condition and quality of life.

The statistical analysis seems adequate and well done but a review by a statistician is nevertheless recommended.

However, some supplementary information is needed as well as some points should be addressed by authors before printing the paper:

1. Although not English speaker it seems that the paper could deserve some language edition.

2. It seems some references have been used carelessly: the authors write: "Women are more frequently less educated than men in their countries of origin and more frequently tend to family and care duties rather than working outside of the home, but the reference is to an article on gender differences in trauma and PTSD in ordinary population in Detroit, hardly applicable to refugees from different parts of Asia, Middle-east and Africa.

3. The traumatic events experienced or witnessed were assessed using the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire, HTQ and psychological symptomatology was assessed using the Hopkins Symptom Checklist, HSCL-25. This means that PTSD-symptoms were not measured, which may be a weakness in the study. HTQ uses the term traumatic events, which may approximates potentially traumatising experiences. In the text, the term trauma comes up some places possibly indication that the respondents had a trauma or were traumatised. This should be clarified in the paper (having experienced traumatic events or potentially traumatising experiences is not the same as having been traumatised.)
4. Some places it is not clear whether the authors talk about correlations or effects, like in the following sentence: "Absence of formal schooling positively affected the perception of current living conditions (OR for dissatisfaction: 0.4, 95% CI 0.3-0.7, p<0.001)." This should be clarified.

5. The authors found it surprising that few reported FGM as reason for fleeing taken into consideration the high frequencies of FGM in some countries, but this should perhaps not be so surprising as most FGM happens in childhood.

Apart from this, this reader recommends this paper published with some minor revisions.

**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.

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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