Author’s response to reviews

Title: Gender-based violence among female youths in educational institutions of Sub-Saharan Africa: A Systematic review and Meta-analyses

Authors:

Addisu Beyene (addisushunu@gmail.com)
Deborah Loxton (Deborah.loxton@newcastle.edu.au)
Catherine Chojenta (Catherine.chojenta@newcastle.edu.au)
Hirbo Roba (hamakiya@gmail.com)
Alemu Melka (alemumelka.sufa@uon.edu.au)

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Author’s response to reviews:

Systematic reviews

BMC Journal

RE: Gender-based violence among female youths in educational institutions of Sub-Saharan Africa: Systematic review and Meta-analysis

Dear Areti Angeliki Veroniki

Thank you for considering our recent manuscript. In response to your letter received November 2018 regarding the manuscript for the above mentioned systematic review, we would like to provide the following clarifications and amendments.

Reviewers comment    Response to comments    References

Reviewer 1

1    Abstract:

Background:

• Insert a space "violence according"
Space has been inserted between
“violence according”

See under “background”

Method:
  • Insert a space "14and". Space has been inserted
“14 and”

See under “methods”
  • Omit the space in "data bases". Space has been inserted
“databases” See under “methods”
  • Cochran's Q (I2) is different from Squared-I (12). Corrected as “Cochrane Q and I2-statistics” See under “methods”
  • Please clarify how the heterogeneity between the studies was exactly assessed. Heterogeneity has been assessed using Cochrane Q and I2-statistics” (which indicated percentage of heterogeneity attributed to between study variation) See under “methods”

Results:
  • Replace "with meta-analysis" with "pooled prevalence of". I would suggest to focus on reporting the "pooled prevalence" while reporting the range in brackets. For instance, the pooled prevalence of gender-based violence estimated at 53.0% [95% CI 40.0%-66.0% (range: 42.30% in Nigeria to 67.70% in Ethiopia).

Meta-analysis replaced by “pooled prevalence”

See under “results”

Conclusions:
  • Repeated results! Please focus on providing an overall conclusion of evidence-based public health implication to direct policy makers.

Conclusion has been revised to address evidence-based public health implication
See under “conclusion in abstract and main document”

Main Body

Introduction:

Consider fine details such as missing spaces between words, across the whole text. extensive revision has been made for spaces and grammar across the documents

Methods:

- Paragraph #1, double check the correctness of the provided registration number in PROSEPRO. No records!! the ID PROSPERO number corrected as CRD4201073260 and link has been added

See under “abstract and methods”

- Replace "was written" with "followed" in "This systematic review was written based on the PRISMA guidelines". The sentence has been revised See under “methods”
- Information sources:
  - Please specify the exact databases that were searched.
The databases that have been searched for articles have been clearly indicated

See under “information sources,”

  o "Contacting experts, and searching the reference lists of articles were methods used to identify the studies" needs to be re-written (poor English!).

Language has been checked and improved See under “information sources”

  o Please elaborate more on which reference lists where searched. Did you search all the reference lists of all full-text screened studies or only reference lists of eligible studies included in your review?

The reference lists of eligible articles searched for additional articles.

See under “information sources”

Search strategy:
The search period was from 22-29th June 2017. Is this the search period of databases or the period when the research team searched the databases, need clarification? The search period June 22-29, 2017 was the period the databases searched for eligible articles. See under “search strategy”

Did you have considered consulting a librarian in designing search strategy and searching the databases? The search strategy was developed in consultation with a senior librarian. See under “search strategy and acknowledgment”

Main data items:

Add that you also extracted the number of those sampled and those who were with GBV, as this is very necessary for the meta-analysis. The total number of study participants and those experienced GBV have added in the texts. See under prevalence of GBV, and types

Provide a full list of items (variables) that had been extracted as a supplementary table. Table 1 contains all necessary covariate that were needed for the quantitative analysis and qualitative synthesis and placed in supplementary files

Please elaborate more on which quantitative estimate for the GBV was extracted from each eligible study. In a sense, if a study, for example, reported overall all GBV prevalence as well as age-stratified or school-grade stratified GBV prevalence, which data was extracted and used in meta-analyses, was it the overall or the stratified? If stratified, what was your prioritization algorithm/scheme to extract stratified data?? And why?

The estimates extracted from eligible articles (n=7) were overall GBV, and types of GBV (sexual, emotional, and physical). See under “main data items”

Data synthesis:

Please elaborate more on your additional analyses (sensitivity and meta-regression analyses), if not why?? We have carried out additional analysis such as publication, subgroup analysis and meta-regression and results were presented in tables. See under “Data synthesis and results, table 2, table 3 and table 4”

Results:
• "The majority (n=15) of studies were categorized as moderate quality (Table 2)". Table 2 presents the meta-regression not the quality of the assessed studies?? Comment was accepted and we have made changes accordingly. Table 2 corrected as “table 6”

See under “additional file 2”

Table 1:

Please edit your table contents to be consistent in removing/adding spaces, decimal points…etc.

Table one is removed from the text document and placed in addition file as per previous comments

See “additional file 4”

Table 2:

• No information provided in the methods sections about the conducted "meta-regression"…??

Meta-regression and its importance has been discussed in methods

See under “data synthesis”

• Title should be more concise. The titles of tables and figures have been revised. See tables and figures
• Elaborate more on the included variables in the meta-regression. I recommend to use binary variables. Meta-regression analysis is used to test if there is a linear relationship between the estimate and covariates. The covariate should be either discrete or continuous to run meta-regression.

• Present meta-regression in the form of "Odds ratio" to quantify the magnitude of heterogeneity between the measured characteristics. Meta-regression shows the extents change of slope (β) with change in covariates. See table 2

Table 3 + 4:

• No information provided in the methods sections about the conducted "Subgroup analyses"…??

The need for subgroup analysis has been discussed in the methods section

See under “data synthesis”

Discussion:
• No specific comments other than addressing types and extra/missing spaces.

Editorial issues have addressed extensively

Additional files

Figure 1:

• How many studies were found from searching reference lists?

The search from eligible articles resulted in articles that have already been identified from databases and therefore, removed as results of duplication.

Forest plots (Figures 2-5):

• I would suggest present data rose to power 2 in order not to confuse reader that the prevalence is <100.

The power has been raised

Seen figure 2-5

• Please provide footnote for each figure explains the meaning the figures contents. For example, the box and its size, the diamond and its width. Foot notes have been added to tables and figures See tables and figures

Reviewer #2:

• All comments addressed satisfactorily, and thus would recommend study approval at this stage. We are very grateful for you constructive comments and effort to improve the scientific contents of our manuscript.