

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Paediatrics Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Adolescents amid emerging COVID-19 pandemic in Bissau, Guinea-Bissau: A Qualitative Study
AUTHORS	N'dure Baboudóttir, Fatou Jandi, Zeca Indjai, Bucar Einarsdóttir, Jónína Gunnlaugsson, Geir

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Dr. Angela Okolo Institution and Country: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Competing interests: None
REVIEW RETURNED	10-Feb-2022

GENERAL COMMENTS	I commend the efforts made to contribute. I particularly appreciate the hard work it took for the language barrier and the need to translate into several languages to get to the final edition. This might have led to the loss of some nuances conveyed by the interviewees. This is to some extent a limitation to this work. The work has however brought to the fore the voices of the Bissau adolescents.
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REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Dr. Ben Beaglehole Institution and Country: Canterbury Dist Hlth Board, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Competing interests: None
REVIEW RETURNED	17-Feb-2022

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>Hi</p> <p>I think this is an interesting topic and provides perspective on the experiences of adolescents in Guinea-Bissau.</p> <p>Specific comments follow:</p> <p>Abstract: Line 22. Does the sentence make sense? Few participants were happy at home...as they appreciated time with family? The two parts seem inconsistent.</p> <p>Abstract: Line 31. I don't think you can argue that the adolescents you interviewed are definitely representative of the wider group. I suggest tempering your recommendations.</p> <p>What is known about the subject: Line 8: You need to back up this assertion (a child-rights approach) in your introduction...</p> <p>Introduction: line 10. Please specify if you are taking about generally over time or since the pandemic.</p> <p>Methods: first paragraph. This seemed to belong in intro rather than methods. I'd also like to know more about the school system in Guinea-Bissau.</p> <p>Methods: line 40. Supplement 1 seems to contain much more than information on recruitment. It also lacks information on recruitment</p>
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	<p>eg how were the collaborators identified, how were the 5 areas identified, how was ethnic variation considered, how were the schools identified??</p> <p>Methods: ethical considerations. Did an ethics committee review this study? (I wasn't sure what feeding into another study meant). Generally the study ethics approval no. is also reported. Is mature the correct word? These were adolescents attending school. What about providing the translated interview?</p> <p>Results: you report 4 themes. How were these identified. More detail in methods is required to understand how the data was analysed.</p> <p>Discussion: there is no mention of limitations and in particular, the degree to which these findings can be generalised within Guinea-Bissau, and globally.</p> <p>Discussion: Line 25. Similarly to the abstract; I think you should temper your conclusion somewhat. It is a stretch to say that hearing their voices will mitigate long term impacts. Perhaps introduce the word 'may'</p>
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Adolescents amid emerging COVID-19 pandemic in Bissau, Guinea-Bissau: A Qualitative Study

Comments to issues raised by Editors and Reviewers

Editor in Chief Comments to Author:

Methods

Ethical approval -Add a sentence here confirming that the study had ethical approval. This is essential. I presume you had local ethical approval as well as from Iceland.

Answer: A qualitative study among adolescents in Guinea-Bissau with a focus on diverse aspects of manifestations of inequality and their health and wellbeing was reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Iceland. This study entails interviews with adolescents – children in line with the UNCRC and less than 18 years of age – without parental consent.

In Guinea-Bissau, this research collaborates with two senior researchers at the National Research Institute of Guinea-Bissau (INEP – Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa) in Bissau. INEP has the role in conducting social science research of national interest (see: <https://www.inep-research-bissau.org/tasks-and-structure>). INEP, located within the Ministry of Education, also ‘conducts health-related research, typically more qualitative than quantitative, and with a social science perspective’ (see https://www.healthresearchweb.org/br/guinea-bissau/nhrs_brief). Thus, a sentence has been added clarifying that the study feeds into a more extensive research

agenda that has been approved by a competent authority, here The Ministry of Education, in line with national regulations.

Quotes would be better in italics.

Answer: This article is submitted to become a part of BMJPO's Special Issue on children's voices during the Covid-19 pandemic, pending acceptance. One article by two of the authors (JE, GG) has already been published in the Collection and did not apply italics for direct citations – see <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjpo-2021-001303>. Thus, we leave the decision to use italics for direct quotations to the Editor.

Associate Editor Comments to the Author:

Please pay particular attention to the suggestions of reviewer 2. Please temper your conclusions and provide more detail about your methods.

Answer: The conclusion has been tempered, and more details about the method have been provided.

Reviewer: 1

Dr. Angela Okolo Comments to Author:

I commend the efforts made to contribute. I particularly appreciate the hard work it took for the language barrier and the need to translate into several languages to get to the final edition. This might have led to the loss of some nuances conveyed by the interviewees. This is to some extent a limitation to this work. The work has however brought to the fore the voices of the Bissau adolescents.

Answer: Thank you for your kind and encouraging comment. We agree with you. The need to translate the interviews from Kriol to Portuguese and finally to English created a possibility of a loss of some nuances and is, therefore, a limitation to our work. We have now revised our conclusion and added a limitation section where this is noted.

Reviewer: 2

Dr. Ben Beaglehole Comments to Author:

I think this is an interesting topic and provides perspective on the experiences of adolescents in Guinea-Bissau.

Answer: Thanks for your kind and encouraging comments on the overall topic of the study.

Abstract:

Line 22. Does the sentence make sense? Few participants were happy at home...as they appreciated time with family? The two parts seem inconsistent.

Answer: This sentence and its inconsistency have been revised.

Line 31. I don't think you can argue that the adolescents you interviewed are definitely representative of the wider group. I suggest tempering your recommendations.

Answer: The abstract has been tempered with these recommendations in mind.

What is known about the subject:

Line 8. You need to back up this assertion (a child-rights approach) in your introduction.

Answer: This assertion has been backed up in our introduction, as suggested.

Introduction:

line 10. Please specify if you are taking about generally over time or since the pandemic.

Answer: We have now specified more clearly in the revised ms that we are referring to the time of the pandemic.

Methods:

First paragraph. This seemed to belong in intro rather than methods. I'd also like to know more about the school system in Guinea-Bissau.

Answer: We have revised the “Methodology” section with the sub-section “Setting” in response to this comment. Other sub-sections are “Data collection”, “Ethical considerations”, and

“Patient and public involvement”. We think that the indicated paragraph fits better in this context than in the “Introduction”.

We have added information about the school system in Guinea-Bissau in the section “Methodology”, sub-section “Setting”.

Line 40. Supplement 1 seems to contain much more than information on recruitment. It also lacks information on recruitment eg how were the collaborators identified, how were the 5 areas identified, how was ethnic variation considered, how were the schools identified?

Answer: We have clarified issues regarding Supplement 1 in the revised ms.

As outlined in the article, we aimed for a diverse group of participants. We choose five neighbourhoods among those most populated in line with the last census in 2009. were chosen (INE, 2009) having ethnic diversity in mind. Two of the authors contacted the most influential association representatives that represent each neighbourhood. They informed about the study and its aims. When approved, they identified participants with the assistance of youth associations in each of the neighbourhoods.

In a more extensive study, we have already identified the schools in Bissau (including those in the respective neighbourhoods), see: Gunnlaugsson G, Baboudóttir FN, Baldé A, Jandi Z, Boiro H, Einarsdóttir J. Public or private school? Determinants for enrolment of adolescents in Bissau, Guinea-Bissau. *Int J Educ Res.* 2021 Jan 1;109:101851.

Ethical considerations. Did an ethics committee review this study? (I wasn't sure what feeding into another study meant). Generally the study ethics approval no. is also reported. Is mature the correct word? These were adolescents attending school. What about providing the translated interview?

Answer: Although not planned from the beginning (we did not know about the Covid-19 at that time of planning), this study is incorporated in a larger research agenda on adolescents in Bissau, approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Iceland, and Ministry of Education in Guinea-Bissau, in line with national rules and regulations. See also answer to Editor in Chief comment.

The use of the word mature has been revised.

The adolescents were promised anonymity and most of the interviewees tell stories about their personal life and that of their family members and friends in a way that might compromise anonymity. Thus, we cannot provide the translated interviews.

Results:

You report 4 themes. How were these identified. More detail in methods is required to understand how the data was analysed.

Answer: When analysing qualitative data, here with Atlas.ti, we usually end with a long list of codes to become sorted into themes and each theme tends to have some sub-themes. We have supplied more details in the “Methodology” to facilitate understanding of the reader how the themes were identified.*Discussion:*

There is no mention of limitations and in particular, the degree to which these findings can be generalised within Guinea-Bissau, and globally.

Answer: The authors are acutely aware that qualitative research of this kind cannot become representative for populations. Yet, our attempts to take gender, residence within Bissau, type of school attendance, and ethnic background into consideration rests on our ambition to have as varied voices heard as possible. Still, as reflected in the “Discussion”, our findings reveal some similarities and some particularities when compared to other studies. In the revised ms, we discuss this limitation.

Line 25. Similarly to the abstract; I think you should temper your conclusion somewhat. It is a stretch to say that hearing their voices will mitigate long term impacts. Perhaps introduce the word 'may'

Answer: The conclusion has been tempered with these recommendations in mind. In the revised ms, we underline that the voices of the adolescents should be heard and **acted upon** while recognising that even that might not be enough to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic.

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Institution and Country: Competing interests:
REVIEW RETURNED	

GENERAL COMMENTS	
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REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Institution and Country: Competing interests:
REVIEW RETURNED	

GENERAL COMMENTS	
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REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Institution and Country: Competing interests:
REVIEW RETURNED	

GENERAL COMMENTS	
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VERSION 2 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

VERSION 3 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Institution and Country: Competing interests:
REVIEW RETURNED	

GENERAL COMMENTS	
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REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Institution and Country: Competing interests:
REVIEW RETURNED	

GENERAL COMMENTS	
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REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Institution and Country: Competing interests:
REVIEW RETURNED	

GENERAL COMMENTS	
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VERSION 3 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

