Reviewer’s report

Title: Assessing smoking status in disadvantaged populations: is computer administered self report an accurate and acceptable measure?

Version: 1 Date: 11 August 2011

Reviewer: Antonio J Molina

Reviewer’s report:

General
This is an interesting study about the use of computer administered self-report to assess smoking status in a disadvantaged population. I find the study quite well written.

Title
The title is correct, showing the main question posed by the authors.

Abstract
I find the abstract straight forward, easy to read, and to the point.

Introduction
The introduction I found reasonably well written and easy to follow.

Methods
The methods section is correct and well explained, including statistical analysis.

Minor essential revisions 1.- Just only a question about Power Calculation: What is the reason to assume a smoking prevalence of 50%: previous data or other reason? It would be interesting that authors explain that question.

Results
In general the results section is clear and easy to follow, but I want to made some comments and suggestions:

Minor Essential Revisions 2.- In Table 1, some of the labels are displaced with respect to the data, probably due to change in formats. Please ensure that the final version match lines to facilitate understanding

Minor Essential Revisions 3.- It would be interesting that authors include a flow diagram about selection, participation in survey and participation in validation analysis to facilitate understanding.

Minor essential revisions 4.- In accuracy of self-reported smoking status vs. BCO subsection, the authors refer no differences in misclassification using p values, but they do not write which tests they used in these analyses.

Moreover, since only 10 self-reported smokers and 9 self-reported non-smokers
are misclassified, p values could be very affected by small sample size, and refer the Odds Ratio with 95% confidence intervals would most relevant information.

Discretionary revisions 1.- The authors refer that “primary school (3%) or secondary school as their highest level of education (65%)”. I think this sentence should be rewritten because the reference to primary school is not sufficiently supported by the data.

Discretionary revisions 2.- The self-reported smoking status paragraph in the text and the table 2 do not show the same data because in table2 only are included the participants in validation analysis. I consider that a sentence, explaining better table 2 data, should be included in the text.

Discussion

Clear. I greet the authors for the inclusion of limitations and generalisability as a part of the discussion section.

Discretionary revisions 3.- If possible, it would be interesting to include some comment on the cost-effectiveness of this type of survey compared to paper surveys.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'