Reviewer’s report

Title: Acute febrile illness and Brucellosis in the Western region of KSA

Version: 3 Date: 4 December 2012

Reviewer: Stephen Mshana

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Acute febrile illness and Brucellosis in the Western region of KSA

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   a. The question posed by the authors is not clear; the rationale of the study was to evaluate the diagnostic test two stages PCR: genus PCR and speciation PCR. The problem is no additional test e.g standardized real time PCR was done as Gold standard, what is reported is the magnitude of brucellosis no sensitivity or specific of the test can be reported form this study. The authors should change the question and rationale of the study or they should perform another standardized speciation protocol

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   a. Methods done are appropriate with references given but what was the type of the study? Why 20 controls not ratio of 1:1 or 1:2 or 1:4 between cases and controls. The type of study is not clear

3. Are the data sound?
   a. Data are sound but there is drawbacks in methodology and research questions posed see 1 and 2 above

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   a. Standards are adhered but formatting changes and quality of figures should be improved. Figure 1 and 2 are of poor quality bands are not clear authors need to produce high quality gels

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   a. Discussion focusing on the magnitude but regarding evaluation nothing can be discussed because data are incomplete

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   a. Authors should state limitations of the study

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   a. YES
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? 
Is the writing acceptable? 
a. Title is too broad the authors should narrow their title to what has been investigated

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.