Reviewer's report

**Title:** Female genital schistosomiasis as an evidence of a neglected cause for reproductive ill-health: A retrospective histopathological study from Tanzania.

**Version:** Date: 26 April 2006

**Reviewer:** Birgitte Jyding Vennervald

**Reviewer's report:**

**General**

The paper deals with an important and somewhat overlooked topic. The retrospective histopathological study is worth publishing because it provides solid data and histological evidence that FGS is a problem and is often misdiagnosed. Furthermore, diagnosis of FGS in epidemiological studies is very difficult, so data like these is a valuable contribution to the knowledge concerning FGS. The paper is long and the inference from FGS to ill-health and HIV transmission can not be made based on the data presented. It can be mentioned in the discussion but the authors should be careful not to draw any conclusions which are not supported by their data.

There are several sections which should be re-phrased because the meaning in not clear (please see below).

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**Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)**

**Title:** The title is long and the retrospective histopathological study does not provide evidence for reproductive ill-health although it provides some indications. I suggest that the title is shortened to: Female genital schistosomiasis: A retrospective histopathological study from Tanzania

**Abstract:**

Line 1: Remove "More than usually acknowledged"
Methods: This is unclear and should be re-phrased.
Results: two first lines not clear and should be re-phrased.
Conclusion: Is not coherent and should be re-phrased. What is meant by "all age groups"? This imply that infants and young children are included as well.

**Background:**

Page 4:
Line 6: "Perhaps more than in any" This is unclear and should be re-phrased.
Line 11: Change "another more" to "another other"
Last line: Remove "ever so"
Page 5, line 8: Change to "The relation of schistosomiasis to cervical.."

**Methods:**

Was ethical clearance obtained from an ethical review board in Tanzania?

**Results:**

Page 7: I am not quite sure how the 419 specimens relate to the 125 specimens from women. Were the rest from men? That should be made clearer.

**Discussion:**

Page 11, line 8: "corpus uteri 4" ???
Line 14: Gabun? Maybe Gabon?
Page 12: "During the 12 years"(39%)" This sentence is not clear and should be re-phrased.
Page 14, line 12: "Reporting two cases" I do not understand the connection between two cases of HIV and prevention of HPV. The authors should explain this in more detail.
Page 17: "Another possible" This is interesting but unclear and the sentence should be re-phrased
Conclusion:
The conclusion is more of a political statement and should be re-written. The authors should not conclude beyond their findings.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests