Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge of breast cancer and its'early detection measures among rural women in Akinyele Local government Area in Ibadan, Nigeria.

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Reviewer: Paolo Bruzzi

Reviewer's report:

General Comments
This paper reports the results of a population survey conducted in 2 rural districts of Nigeria, focused on women's knowledge about risk factors and early detection of breast cancer. Nigeria is a developing country where breast cancer incidence is rapidly increasing, especially in more recent (young) cohorts of women. The issue is poorly explored, and it is of general interest, since the results of this study can be applied (or stimulate research) in other countries with similar social and health situations.

A valuable information that should be provided concerns the type of secondary prevention program for breast cancer and the population coverage. The fact that 86% of women reported having had their breast examined for preventive purposes suggests that some activity in prevention is in place. The study methodology is accurate, and the participation excellent: 96% of interviewed women provided an adequate questionnaire. However the Authors should make it clear whether the 420 interviewed women represent the entire sample selected for the interview, or there were refusals (or women not traced). In the latter instance, they should provide the total number of women included in the original sample, or at least the size of the target population. It is not clear what the 10% referred to in the Methods section represents.

The results are interesting and sometimes striking, even though some clarification is needed: for instance, why if 349 women reported having had their breasts examined for prevention, only 46 told who examined them? More in general, whenever a general question is followed by a more specific question as in the preceding case, the number and proportion of non-responders to the 2nd question should be given.

The Discussion section is not always clear, nor all the conclusions of the Authors are straightforward or justified by the results.

Minor Comments
- It is difficult to believe that 100,000 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed each year in Nigeria, with a population of 90 millions, for a crude incidence 2-3 times higher than that observed in all Western Countries, where, due to older age-distribution, the crude incidence should be much higher. The projection of 500,000 new cases per year by the turn of the Century is completely unrealistic. There is possibly some confusion between incidence and prevalence.

Conclusions
This is a well designed study, that provides useful information in a public health area where little is known. The paper requires a careful revision.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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

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