Author's response to reviews

Title: action of lack of reproductive rights with depression among women. A hospital based case control study.

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Depression in developing countries has a high prevalence. Women suffer disproportionately from depression as they are more under privileged than men and have multiple roles. This gender inequality makes women more prone to depression. Lack of reproductive and sexual rights is an important marker of gender inequality and women do not have the freedom to express these needs in many parts of the world. This lack of autonomy and diminution of self esteem promotes depressive disorders in women. Therefore this study was conducted to determine the association of lack of reproductive rights with depression among women. Although, considering the cultural taboos and social norms in our part of the world, where women are reluctant to talk about there sexual rights, this seemed to be a difficult task but the response of women was quite surprising.

Our study concluded an association of depression with less than 18 years of age at marriage, decision for marriage by parents, abuse by in-laws, less than or equal to 3 hours per day spent with husband, frequency of intercourse less than or equal to 2 per week and marital rape.

This indicates that efforts should be directed towards creating awareness about the reproductive and sexual rights of women. Physicians should be trained to screen and identify women who may be at risk for psychological distress as a result of denial of reproductive rights so that they can support positive mental health outcomes through individual, family or marital counseling, especially in couples where there is communication problem, physicians can help to provide counseling to bridge this gap.