Reviewer's report

Title: Health-promoting behaviors and social support of women of reproductive age, and strategies for advancing their health: Protocol for a mixed methods study

Version: 1 Date: 17 February 2011

Reviewer: Ahti Anttila

Reviewer's report:

1. The background section of the manuscript is very clearly written, indicating the importance and research needs, and the major scope of the study. However, formulation of the study aims does not include specified study hypotheses, partially because of the adopted research methods but partially because the researchers have not yet elaborated the purpose in such a detailed manner that concrete hypotheses could be provided. The aims could be formulated in a greater detail in order to comprehend the major hypotheses of the study.

2. The manuscript provides lots of details; still I have some concerns that there were some sources (e.g. Walker & colleagues 1987; Brandt & Weinert 1987) for the questionnaire study that were not included in the list of references and instead those articles discussing about the scales (Ref. No 13; and Refs. No 9 and 14) do not include considerations on all the relevant aspects of the original scales comprehensively enough. Adding all documents to the list of references, and preferably preparing an annex to show the planned items of the questionnaire - at least in its key components - would be helpful in order to make the protocol more understandable.

3. If possible, the multi-variate methods to be used in the statistical analysis of the questionnaire-based data could be described in a greater detail. In addition to linear regression there might be alternative methods suitable for the analyses.

4. Yes, the writing is very clear and English is excellent.