Reviewer's report

Title: Modern contraceptive use among sexually active men in Uganda: Does discussion with a health worker matter?

Version: 3 Date: 16 December 2013

Reviewer: Daniel Wight

Reviewer's report:

This analysis of DHS data addresses an important issue in low income countries, namely the factors associated with modern contraceptive use. It is, by and large, clearly written. However, the cross sectional nature of the data and limited detail about type of contraception and who is practising it, mean that the findings are of limited interest.

Major compulsory revisions

1. It is unclear what constitutes the main outcome variable. 'Modern contraceptive use' could include several female and male-directed methods, including condoms. Since condoms have another purpose, to prevent sexually transmitted infections, different factors shape their use from that of other contraceptives, as is well documented in the literature. It therefore seems important to distinguish between factors associated with condom use and factors associated with other methods of contraception. The Methods section implies that data on contraceptive method are available.

2. The paper purports to be about contraceptive use amongst men, but in fact it is about contraceptive use by both men and women and no distinction is made between the two. Distinguishing between different contraceptive methods would allow male and female contraceptive use to be distinguished.

3. There is an assumption throughout that discussing family planning with a health care worker is what prompted contraceptive use. However, it might well be that the prior decision to use contraceptives led the men to have a discussion with the health worker. Cross-sectional data does not allow one to clarify causation. This should be acknowledged and wording changed wherever this is discussed. For instance, at the start of the Discussion, instead of stating 'This research examines the determinants of male contraception...' it would be more accurate to state 'This research examines the factors associated with contraceptive use...'.

Minor essential revisions

1. Abstract, Conclusions: The association between contraceptive use and discussion with health care workers does not justify the statement that greater interaction with health care workers 'will greatly improve contraceptive use' (see above comment 3).

2. The 94% reporting that they had had an HIV test and received the results
seems extremely high and suggests strong social desirability bias. If so, it might have implications for the validity of other reported behaviour. This should be discussed.

3. In Table 2 the confidence intervals for 'Women who use contraception become promiscuous' are clearly wrong.

Discretionary revisions

1. Why does the title state 'sexually active men'? Which other kind of men would use contraceptives?

2. Abstract, Background: Why should research on family planning in itself be expected to lead to changes in contraceptive use amongst men?

3. The section on Data analysis in Methods should, ideally, explain the rationale for the different stages of modelling.

4. It would be interesting to know how preference to have another child related to number of children already born (and alive).

5. p.11, 2nd para: Why would a preference for sons over daughters lead to contraceptive use? That seems to presume that the parents know the sex of the next child they will conceive.

Level of interest: An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.