Author's response to reviews

Title: Correlates of consistent condom use among recently initiated and traditionally circumcised men in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Natalie Pafitis

We thank you for the positive evaluation of our manuscript titled “Correlates of consistent condom use among recently initiated and traditionally circumcised men in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa” (MS: 1693712641110663).

The reviewers have suggested revisions to the paper. We have now worked on reviewers comments and added the new information requested. Below we provide point-by-point description of changes made. We hope that you agree with us that the quality of the paper has improved and look forward to seeing your decision on possible publication in the BMC Public Health.

With kind regards, also on behalf of the co-authors,

Sincerely,

Kind Regards,

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1. both reviewers asked about the convenience sample - though the word convenient was also used - I believe the term is usually convenience sample - but at any rate the authors need to be very clear on the limitations of this approach and give any indications in the results that their sampling approach did in fact yield a relatively representative sample of respondents - the sheer numbers imply that this is likely, but the authors need to state clearly how representative their sample might be and what biases there might be - for example, one reviewer raised the issue of interviewers coming from the area and thus having their own opinions about TMC - but also did that familiarity also influence whom they selected to interview. What was don't in training the interviewers to reduce bias. Also having 40 interviewers, while helping get the job done faster, introduces more inter-observer bias. Again these are points to note in the methods please.

2. It is good that the authors considered a theoretical model in their study - theory of planned behavior (aka theory of reasoned action) is quite appropriate for considering the influence of social norms. That said, it is not clear that the authors actually used the TBP elements as key study variables and thus in the development of their instruments. Ideally in a survey one would let understanding of a potentially relevant theory or theories guide survey development - this is not open ended grounded theory research where theories arise from data, but a survey that has initial objectives - so please explain possible in the introduction about how and IF TPB actually guided the study or was only brought in as an afterthought"