Reviewer's report

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

Version: 2
Date: 9 December 2013

Reviewer: Ademola Ajuwon

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

This paper was derived from a well-planned and implemented behavioral research that identified the factors that predict consistent use of condoms among recently traditionally circumcised young men in Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The paper is well written and presented. However, there are several issues that the authors need to clarify and revise before the paper can be considered suitable for publication in BMC Public Health. The details of these issues are provided below.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Abstract

The data presented in the results section of the abstract is scanty. Readers will also be interested in the data that show the profile of the respondents (age, ethnicity, sexual behavior, use of condom). For example, it would be necessary to state the number of men who were sexually active and those who had used the condom during the period under review. It is also important to state that the study was conducted in Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The conclusion for the study is not clear. The authors should revise their conclusion by being specific and clearer.

Background

1. HIV is a virus; therefore it is tautological to state that ‘...5.5 million South Africans reportedly lived with HIV virus…’ (page 3)

2. It is not correct to state that ‘Consistent and correct use of condom is the most effective means of preventing STI...’ page 3. Abstinence from sex is the most effective means of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV. The authors should revise this statement to state the fact that consistent and correct use of condoms is one of the effective means of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV.

3. The authors have given comprehensive background information about the social and cultural relevance of male circumcision and the context in which this rite of passage is performed in the study area. However, there is need to clarify whether or not young males participate in circumcision voluntarily or they are
coerced to do so.

4. The authors also need to explain whether young men could have sex prior to undergoing circumcision.

Methods

1. Although the authors have stated that the 2237 men who participated in the study represented a convenient sample, there is still need to provide some information about the settings (household, schools, markets, recreation centers) from which these men were recruited; it is also necessary to describe how these men were approached and invited to participate in the study?

2. It will be helpful if the authors describe the settings where the pre-test of the questionnaire used for data collection was conducted and the number of men who participated in this activity.

3. The authors stated on page 9 that participants were asked if they registered with the local chief before undergoing the initiation process; the question is why this information is important and relevant to the study; what is the cultural meaning or significance of prior registration in the local context? The authors should keep in mind that BMC is read by a global audience and that readers would appreciate the social meaning of registration with a chief prior to circumcision.

4. The authors should present data on the marital status of the respondents if this information was collected from respondents.

Findings

1. This component of the paper should be listed as ‘Findings’ Instead it should be ‘Results’ since only quantitative were collected.

2. There is need for the authors to clarify the significance or meaning of the result that states that ‘91.1% of the men were able to identify their local traditional leader by name’ (page 11).

3. Table 1 is too busy; I suggest that the authors highlight the values for the key variables of knowledge and use of condoms in an attempt to reduce the volume of data on this table

4. I suggest that the authors create a table that shows the profile of the respondents (age, ethnicity, marital status, sexual behavior, use of condom) before presenting data on univariate, multivariate and logistic regression

5. The authors mentioned on page 11 that 66.5% of the respondents reported that they got permission and registered with their traditional leaders prior to proceedings of initiation and circumcision processes. Why is permission required for circumcision?

Citations of references

1. The authors have not fully complied with the reference format for the journal. I suggest that the authors check the format for collation of the List of references starting from page 19.
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests