Reviewer’s report


Version: 2 Date: 13 June 2008

Reviewer: Rakhi Dandona

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

The major limitation of this paper is poor methodology restricting the understanding and generalisability of the study findings.

Background

1. Page 4, last paragraph, lines 7 to page 5, line 4 – This can be deleted as it is not relevant to this paper.

Methods

2. Was the questionnaire self-administered? If yes, please specify the level of education that would be needed for a woman to participate in this study as there were some women who have never been to school (Table 1).

3. Please specify that the information on women who refused to participate was not documented.

4. Which women were selected for the open interview? Were they from 226 women who answered the questionnaire?

5. Page 6, paragraph 2 – It is stated that the women were asked if they were willing to be tested for HIV. On page 15, paragraph 2, it is stated that the reason for many women unwilling to be tested for HIV is indeed that they have been already tested! It is not clear what to make of this information. Was the questionnaire not designed to capture if the participants were already tested? These data do not add to the paper.

6. Page 7, paragraph 3 – This can be deleted.

Results

7. All Tables and relevant text – 95% confidence intervals are irrelevant here. Appropriate chi-square or t-test should be used and results presented.

8. Page 11, paragraph 3 – 60% of women reported using condom always/sometimes with the steady partner. This use of condom is high in a steady relationship. This could be true and then the reasons for this should be explored in the discussion. If not true, this could mean that the women did not
understand the question and hence not much can be done with these data. In addition, the utility of these data is questionable if no timeframe was specified for this question.

9. Table 2 - A very important finding here is that a high proportion of women responded “do not know” for these questions in addition to incorrect responses. Please discuss this in detail.

Discussion

10. Page 12, last 2 – If a probable reason for “do not know” responses is that women are not used to answer such questions, the utility of the study findings are further undermined.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'