Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence of HIV, HSV-2, and Syphilis in Male Sex Partners of Pregnant Women in Peru

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Reviewer: sia msuya

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General
This paper is worthy of publication. The data are clearly presented in a succinct manner. The study examines relevant issues and addresses important aspects of the HIV situation in Peru. In particular, the indirect risk of infection of both the female and the neonate, via the male partners contact with high-risk sub-sectors of the society, are clearly demonstrated.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. In the abstract it is reported that this study is based on 1835 male partners of the pregnant women. Yet when you look at table 1, the total number of participants is less than 1835 and it is not explained. E.g. Education (N=1795), City (N=1796), Employment (N=1797), Relation with pregnant women (N=1783). All the calculations of prevalence of sexual behaviour characteristics, report of GUD, drug use etc were based on N=1795 and not on the reported N=1835. Can the authors explain the discrepancy?

2. Can the authors give both the number (N) and percentages of the STIs in the result section, paragraph 3

3. Pg 7, line 22 and Table 1. The mean number of life time partners is reported as 9.9 with a SD of 35.1. For number of yrs with the pregnant woman, Mean 3.9 and SD 4.6. It portrays a pregnant woman with a negative number of lifetime partners!!! It will be better if the authors use the median and the range to describe the population, rather than the mean.

4. Pg 7, last paragraph. The 31 participants reporting sexual contact......51.6% said they had unprotected intercourse with men. But in previous sentence it is reported that 0.9% described unprotected sex with men during that time. Can you clarify what does 0.9% refers to, is lifetime or last year unprotected sex.

5. Pg 10, paragraph 1. A further complication is the fact that only 30%.......That sentence is not very clear. Did the authors meant that some of the subjects were recruited at a subsequent visits to the hospital, and not as described in the methodology or?? Can it be re-written in a clearer way.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. In table 2, HSV-2 column, regarding sexual active years. The unadjusted and adjusted OR and confidence intervals are exactly the same, was there a typo error?

2. Can the authors define in the methods section what do they mean by “recent contact” in terms of time.

3. Pg. 7, last paragraph. The subjects recent contact with MSM is given at 1.7% in line 27 and appears to be given at 1.0% in line 30. If this is a typographical error, please correct.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

1. Pg 3, line 16. I suggest; Among……., 26.7% of their HIV infected male partners…..

2. Pg 5, line 5. You said the study was conducted in the 3 cities with higher HIV prevalence than in other places/general population. Can you add what is the prevalence of HIV in the general Peru population vs. range of HIV prevalence in the 3 cities so that the reader can get understand a bit about the local situation in Peru.

3. Can you add a sentence describing when and where the test results and counselling were given, and how you dealt with HSV-2 positive cases?

4. Pg 9, par 3. Your meaning will be clear to readers dealing with these issues but would be more clear if you perhaps reversed the first 2 sentences in order. You want the readers understanding to be “to the extent that HSV-2 and other genital ulcerative diseases increase risk of HIV infection” the prevalence of HSV-2 in this ……….

5. Pg 9, par 4, line 6. Typo error, …..only 1.7% and 8.8% . Change to 8.9% to match previous percentages.

6. Pg 10, line 12. Typo; among pregnant, two words.

7. There is a need to check the way the journals have been quoted e.g. Aids instead of AIDS in ref no 8, 10 etc.

8. Pg 2 (abstract) and pg. 9, 1st & 4th paragraphs. The idea that a majority of the subjects were at less risk because although they had a history of contact with MSM & FSW, they had not had contact within the past year (recent?), needs further attention or presentation in another manner. Although infectiousness varies at different stages of the an STD, we are never-the-less dealing with 2 lifetime diseases (HIV and HSV-2) and a third that responds to treatment (syphilis). In this context, “recent” and “risk” may not relate as clearly as implied ????.
What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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'