Reviewer's report

Title: Sexual Practices among Adolescents in Tanzania

Version: 1 Date: 24 February 2009

Reviewer: Elisabeth E Faxelid

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Background
1. The second sentence in background is too long. And the wording needs to be worked on.
2. Change Sub-Saharan countries to sub-Saharan African countries and Sub-Saharan Africa to sub-Saharan Africa
3. Ref 7 are supposed to tell that .....considered deviant in the continent. The refs is only from one country and can not be a ref for views from the whole continent
4. Suggest changes in text as follows:
   Nevertheless, the practice of homosexual as well as heterosexual anal intercourse has been reported from different parts of Africa.
   A recent study......... ........ and 36.1% had experience of dry sex
   Available literature on sexuality and reproductive behaviour among adolescents in the region show that there have been minimal changes in sexual behaviour such as reduction of unwanted pregnancies, STIs and HIV
   Cut the word needs in the last sentence in the background

Methods
1. The number of 133 primary school adolescents sounds exact and not ....about....
2. Most of these (add students) were in class 5, 6, and 7. These (add students) were mainly in form 3 and 4.
3. Why are the students mainly from these classes since it was a random sample? How was the randomization done?
4. Were the three sub-villages and the three ten-cells also selected randomly? In that case state so
5. Would prefer that the adolescents were asked to participate not invited.
6. ....District Education Officers in each of the study sites (add as well as from) local .......
7. Change .....gathered information was done to ..... was given.
8. Was the self administrated questionnaire for the in-schools filled in during school time? In that case state so.
9. Put the sentence Out-of-school adolescents were interviewed....... together
with the sentence A self-administrated questionnaire was used for ……

Results
1. You sometimes write adolescents and sometimes unmarried adolescents. I suggest you write only adolescents since the whole sample is unmarried adolescents but when you point it our it implies that there are also married ones in your sample (which is not the case as far as I understand). You also write that 884 reported pre-marital sex. Isn’t everything pre-marital if they are unmarried? Also this implies that some might have marital sex.

2. Masturbation is of course a sexual practice but a totally safe sexual practice compared to the others. Would have liked this to be pointed out somewhere. One could e.g. group them into penetrative and non-penetrative sexual practices.

3. The sentence Out of 864 unmarried (cut that) adolescents reporting having sexual intercourse …… is unclear. Do you refer to both vaginal and anal? Still in table 2 there are 885 that reported vaginal sex. I also suggest that you change the tempus to: ever had intercourse, had been unwilling, had been deceived.

4. Unclear what the denominators are for More females, 76 (81.7%), than males 32 (66.7%), ……

5. Likewise, significantly more in-school adolescents (number missing here)……Also it is unclear what is the denominator.

6. The last paragraph in the result section is rather unclear. First there seem to a repetition. Secondly it is unclear who are the 371 and half of who? Of sexually active? Of out-of-school adolescents? Condom use should be referred to sexual activity but not to masturbation.

Discussion
1. The bracket in the first sentence does not have an end.

2. The last sentence in the first paragraph needs a ref

3. Put a full stop after ref 16 and start next sentence with But it is lower than ………

4. I very much doubt that anal sex is one of the drivers of the epidemic. Need ref on this!

5. The sentence ending with ref 21 is hanging. Need to elaborate on this or cut it out.

6. ……may be an underestimate since sexual abuse is considered……

7. Males reported younger partners and females reported older partners………In our study.

8. Similar findings ……This sentence is very unclear.

9. ……among study participants. The reported figures could either be an over- or an underreporting. You should elaborate better on this issue. Your ref is to primary school children.

10. Something missing in the last sentence.

Conclusion
1. This is not really a conclusion but implications and suggestions. A conclusion should only state the most important findings from your study.

Table 1
Other or no religion
Table 3 and Figure 1
Who is reflected in this table and fig, only those sexually active? State n

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

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

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