Reviewer's report

**Title:** Retrospective observational study of diagnostic accuracy of the Xpert(R) MTB/RIF assay on fiberoptic bronchoscopy sampling, for early diagnosis of smear-negative or sputum-scarce patients with suspected tuberculosis

**Version:** 3  
**Date:** 24 April 2014

**Reviewer:** Teck Boon Low

**Reviewer's report:**

Minor essential revisions:

This is a retrospective study looking at the diagnostic accuracy of the Xpert MTB/RIF assay on fiberoptic bronchoscopy sampling for early diagnosis of smear negative or sputum scarce patients with suspected tuberculosis in low TB burden countries.

In line with the study by Theron et. al this study confirms the clinical usefulness of the Xpert MTB/RIF assay over the use of sputum microscopy.

1) Overall the paper is written relatively well but will need some language corrections including typing errors for example in the last sentence on the section 'Ethical considerations'.

2) There is discrepancy between the text and table 1 (Male/female ration 1:7)

3) Did the patient cohort have sputum induction first (sputum scarce patients) before proceeding to bronchoscopy in your study population?

4) With reference to table 2, should the denominator be 23 instead of 20 for the performances relative to culture since the postive TB cultures reported in 23 patients?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

None