Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Knowledge and use of emergency contraception among women in the Western Cape province of South Africa: A cross-sectional study

**Version:** Date: 14 June 2007

**Reviewer:** Douglas Ball

**Reviewer’s report:**

**General**

The authors have done a good job revising the submission. It is much clearer and focused. I still require a few minor changes prior to accepting it for publication. I have classed two of these as ‘major’ but this is somewhat a misnomer – but I feel strongly that they must be attended to.

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

**Results**

The continued focus on independent significant findings without recognition that some are not significant following the multivariate logistic regression is inappropriate methodologically. AT THE LEAST, a statement needs to be added in the results to mention that certain observed significant associations (age, whether last pregnancy was unintended, last method of contraception) disappear after controlling for the other factors due to the heterogeneous nature of the sample. A more balanced presentation of both sets of results would be preferred. [The alternative is to remove all reference to the logistic regression but this would be a backward step]

**Table 4.**

Provide a list of all other variables included in the model as a footnote to the table stating that they were non-significant. It is not adequate to expect these to be inferred from another table – it is important to be clear. Also provide the R2 (R-squared) value for the model (here or in the text).

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

**Abstract**

26 clinics, not 30.

**Results**

P4, line 3 – ‘equivalent’

**Discussion**

P8 – I agree that generalizing one can say that EC awareness is lower in SA than in UK, USA. But I do not believe that a generalization is appropriate, especially given the variation seen in the results among various subpopulations. Among more educated women in this survey, awareness is probably similar to Western countries (excuse the generalization), while for others it is much lower. Low awareness has been reported in socially disadvantaged/uneducated women in France (Moreau et al. Contraception 2005; 71:202) and San Francisco (Jackson et al. Contraception 2000; 61: 351). A recognition of this variation (weighted towards greater proportions of unaware women in SA because of the higher levels of those socially disadvantaged, etc.) is what was being requested. I can accept that the authors might not wish to go into this and I would be satisfied if the word “overall” (or similar) is used to start the second sentence of the discussion to recognize the generalization.

P10, first sentence ‘clinics’
P10, second sentence delete ‘and’
P10, second paragraph, last sentence – this is not a limitation of this study.
References
The authors have not attended to the references as directed in the first review.
#3, 10, 13, 14, 15 are given in a different format
#5 is in the incorrect order
#16, 20, 21 journal name is not abbreviated
#1, 12, 17, 21 only provide names of first 3 authors (while others give all names)
Need to be consistent.

Table 1.
Clarify what the numbers in parentheses represent (% in column heading?)
Change ‘Median grade’ to Median level of schooling (grade) for greater clarity/understanding by international readers.
Total for age is 26 out of 831. Is this correct?

Table 3.
Move the % symbol to the appropriate columns as in table 2.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests