Reviewer's report

Title: Situating STI Service Delivery - A Discourse Analysis

Version: 1 Date: 10 May 2012

Reviewer: Julia V Bailey

Reviewer's report:

This study is a qualitative analysis of interviews with STI service providers, situating their views in an institutional context. This topic area is interesting.

Major Compulsory Revisions

The authors give a clear account of a Foucauldian discursive perspective, and have justified this analytical approach for a study of institutional health care. The main problem with this paper is that the authors have not carried out a discourse analysis – they have reported a variety of themes which are not in themselves discourses. Discourse analysis can unpick the social construction of phenomena, and/or social actions – this paper could focus on the social construction of ‘STI providers’, ‘the clinic’, ‘STI’ or ‘youth’ for example, and consider the implications of these constructions for the provision of care.

This paper could be revised in one of two ways:

a) A fairly straightforward revision to present this analysis as a thematic analysis which reports on STI providers’ views of their role and of STI service provision. This would be an interesting paper.

b) A re-analysis and re-structuring to present a discursive analysis

If the authors decide to present a discourse analysis, the ‘so what’ question should be clear to the reader – i.e. how does a discourse analysis illuminate this area in a way that a thematic analysis could not? What does the analysis mean for STI provision?

Minor Essential Revisions

Please define Options for Sexual Health for international readers

Discretionary Revisions

Within the method section, there is a long description of the nurse STI training programme – it is not clear why this is relevant – either omit, or draw out for the reader the significance of nurse expertise and training.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?

The authors wish to examine the knowledge, attitudes and experiences of STI providers: the authors could clarify what the problem is that this study will
address (and if DA is chosen, why DA is appropriate).

I would avoid positioning this as part of a larger study, and instead consider this as a complete study in itself.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?

See above

The methods section should start with ‘Setting and Participants’

Who carried out the interviews? Particularly for a discourse analysis, the reader needs to have information about the position of the researcher/s.

NVivo did not analyze the data! How were data analyzed?

http://extra.shu.ac.uk/daol/articles/v1/n1/a1/antaki2002002.html

3. Are the data sound?

The quotations given are relevant, and support the arguments made in the text

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?

Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?

The direction of the discussion will depend upon the research question/s and approaches that the authors choose – it could comprise discussion of the perceived shortcomings of service provisions (for a thematic analysis), or the implications of the discursive phenomena identified (e.g. constructions of ‘STI specialist’, ‘youth’ etc). At the moment, it is a bit of a jumble of both of these.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?

Yes, although these should be moved from the section entitled ‘Conclusion’.

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?

Yes, well referenced

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?

No, the title does not clearly convey the content of the paper

9. Is the writing acceptable?
The writing style is excellent, very clear and reader-friendly

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

**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