Reviewer's report

Title: Limits to modern contraceptive use among young women in developing countries: a systematic review of qualitative research

Version: 1 Date: 9 December 2008

Reviewer: John Cleland

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As probably the first systematic review of qualitative studies on this topic, the paper is of considerable interest.

Discretionary Revisions:
(1) The limited geographical range of the reviewed studies should be more explicitly acknowledged (only 5 countries represented).
(2) The paper would benefit from greater contextualisation. In 2 countries contraceptive use among married couples is high (Vietnam dominated by IUDs and South Africa dominated by hormonal methods). In the other 3 countries use is low, despite evidence of 'unmet need'. In low use countries is it realistic to raise use of modern methods among adolescents when these methods have not yet gained acceptance among adults?
(3) On page 12, Results Section 3, the text implies dislike of contraception in general by male partners but the examples refer only to condoms. The distinction is important and needs clarification.
(4) for this reviewer the most surprising result, in view of the high international profile of teenage pregnancy and childbearing, was that only 12 qualitative papers on the topic could be located. Some discussion of this point would be welcome.

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