Author's response to reviews

Title: Parent-child communication about sexual and reproductive health in rural Tanzania: Implications for young people’s sexual health interventions

Authors:

Joyce Wamoyi (jwamoyi@hotmail.com)
Angela Fenwick (a.j.fenwick@soton.ac.uk)
Mark Urassa (malloomark@yahoo.com)
Basia Zaba (basia.zaba@lshtm.ac.uk)
William Stones (william.stones@aku.edu)

Version: 2 Date: 20 April 2010

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Sir/Madam,

Parent-child communication about sexual and reproductive health in rural Tanzania: Implications for young people’s sexual health interventions

We very much appreciate the useful comments and suggestions on this paper. We hope that we have adequately responded to the suggestions given by the reviewer (Jane Ferguson).

We have addressed the various points as follows.

a. Major Compulsory Revisions
1. There is a substantive relevant literature on parent-adolescent communication not uniquely on sexual and reproductive health which is not referred to (e.g. Developing methods to study parent-child relationships in rural sub-Saharan Africa: an exploratory project in Mwanza, northern Tanzania, Kija Nyalali, Pieter Riemes, Kim Miller’s work on Family matters programmes in Nyanza province, Kenya; WHO helping parents in developing countries improve adolescent health.

We have addressed this as requested. We have consulted the suggested sources of literature and additional others and changes made as necessary throughout the Manuscript. For example, on pages 2 a new paragraph (highlighted in yellow) including new literature (e.g. Ref 16 (WHO: Summaries of Projects in Developing Countries Assisting the Parents of Adolescents) and ref 19 (Adamchak et al.,: “The Straight Talk Campaign in Uganda: Impact of mass media initiatives, summary report,” Horizons Final Report) has been incorporated.

2. Clarify and indicate reasons for 'lack of direct parent-child communication about sex ....lack of parent-child closeness, shame, fear,' (page 37). The data for this finding is not manifest.

The reasons for lack of direct parent-child communication about sex (i.e. lack of parent-child closeness, shame, fear) have been included on pages 27-33. This is under the broad title of “Perceptions of parents on parent-child communication about SRH”. This additional section is highlighted in yellow.
3. Clarify the contribution of data from participant observation to the overall findings. Data from in-depth interviews seems to predominate - there may be good (methodological) reasons for this worth highlighting.

An explanation on this has been provided on page 5 and 8. As can be seen in the added text, the three methods (focus groups, in-depth interviews and participant observation complemented each other and hence although participant observation contributed to providing some background information/understanding, we opted for more direct illustrative quotes from the focus groups and in-depth interviews where relevant. We have also made attempts to refer to a finding that resulted from PO where necessary. An example of such specific mention is on page 23, 27 and 31.

4. Develop further the perspectives of young people regarding the communication about sex with their parents. The section currently addressing this (child satisfaction page 27) may be 'mis'titled as there is limited data and discussion about 'satisfaction' or young persons perspectives of the utility of communication to them.

We agree with the reviewer’s point on the ‘mistitlement’ of the section on child satisfaction (page 33 (previously page 27)). We have therefore made changes on the title (see page 33). We have also developed further the perspectives of young people regarding the communication about sex with their parents as suggested by the reviewer (please see pages 33 to 38). These changes include additional findings (pages 33-34).

b. Minor Essential Revisions

1. Check references - in several cases, it appeared that the wrong references were being referred to (examples in the Discussion and conclusion section)

We are so grateful to the reviewer for spotting this, as during insertion from endnote, several references had moved around and been wrongly placed. Changes have been made in the relevant places in the discussion, conclusion section and in the other parts of the document. These changes are in red font.

2. Clarify components of 'SRH' used as an abbreviation throughout, but in reference to parental communication with their children could include many aspects: pubertal development, menstruation; wet dreams; masturbation; sexual attraction; sexual behaviours; consequences of sexual behaviours including pregnancy; STI; HIV/AIDS; protecting against consequences etc. (some of which are discussed, but not all)

The components of SRH in relation to parent-child communication in this study have been included on page 3. This is highlighted in yellow.
3. Develop further the perspectives of young people regarding the communication about sex with their parents. The section currently addressing this (child satisfaction page 27) may be 'mis'titled as there is limited data and discussion about 'satisfaction' or young person’s perspectives of the utility of communication to them.

This comment is the same as point 4 under major compulsory revisions above. Please see how this has been addressed under point 4 above.

We very much hope that these changes make the paper suitable for publication in the Journal of Reproductive Health. Thank you for reconsidering this manuscript, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Joyce Wamoyi.