Reviewer's report

Title: Home based HIV counseling and testing: factors associated with access to HIV care services in eastern Uganda

Version: 5 Date: 5 June 2015

Reviewer: Leonidas Palaiodimos

Reviewer's report:

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISIONS
1. I believe that the question of the study should be defined more clearly. In specific:
   • Abstract: The background section needs 1-2 introductory sentences before stating the aim of the study, e.g. about HIV in Uganda or the Kumi program. Then, I suggest authors state the aim of the study clearly, e.g. “The aim of this study was to explore the factors…”.
   • Manuscript: Similarly, the aim of the study should be well defined at the end of the background section.
   • There are some studies in literature that “touch” a similar issue in the same area, such as this one: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22820807. However, I think that this study does have some unique characteristic, but I would like to see authors describe the unique features of this study along with the aim of the study.

2. Some modifications are needed in the methods section, that is:
   • Study setting section can become more concise by omitting some clauses, e.g. line 155 or editing syntax.
   • Inclusion and exclusion criteria are stated, yet I suggest them be stated more clearly.
   • I would like to see the questionnaire in a figure or table and be explained in the manuscript why this method has been chosen.

3. Discussion&Conclusions:
   • lines 361,362: which studies did report the opposite finding (references)?
   • lines 372,373: Who are the other researchers (references)?
   • At the discussion sections, authors should explain how the results of this study are important. There is no such explanation or suggestions.
   • Conclusion section include suggestions/recommendations but these should be reported more concisely at this section and more detailed at the discussion section.

4. The English writing needs major editing regarding syntax and grammar, e.g.
correct usage of adverbs, prepositions, articles and conjunctions. If authors get the manuscript edited appropriately, it could be acceptable.

DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS
I suggest authors modify the title to make it more descriptive, e.g. “Factors associated with access to HIV care services in eastern Uganda; a cross-sectional study” or “Factors associated with access to HIV care services in eastern Uganda; the Kumi home-based counseling and testing program experience”.

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: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

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