Reviewer's report

Title: Social Support Among HIV-Positive and HIV-Negative Adolescents in Umlazi, South Africa: Changes in Family and Partner Relationships During Pregnancy and the Postpartum Period

Version: 2 Date: 24 January 2015

Reviewer: Mzikazi Nduna

Reviewer's report:

BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth

Re: 'Social Support Among HIV-Positive and HIV-Negative Adolescents in Umlazi, South Africa: Changes in Family and Partner Relationships During Pregnancy and the Postpartum Period'

Lauren M Hill, Suzanne Maman, Allison K Groves and Dhayendre Moodley BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth Research article

- Minor Essential Revisions

Abstract, in the Methods paragraph. Authors should please mention the analytic technique used.

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
The question posed by the authors is well defined and important in the South African context.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The researchers used qualitative in-depth interviews to answer the question., This method seems suitable for this study.

3. Are the data sound?
Data collected by the authors seems to be accepted. It would, however, have helped if they identify the quotes either by participant number or pseudo name; this helps the reader get a sense of which participants’ data was used.

4. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
The researchers refer to what they seem to treat as a disconfirming case. That of denied pregnancy but not much analysis and discussion is given to this. This is emerging as a concern in adolescent pregnancies and maybe they could have spent some time in it. It also explains lack of partner support for both the mother and child. Other studies on adolescent pregnancies have done the same, to minimise denied pregnancy and maybe hence the authors suggestions in the background that ‘partners are more accepting of pregnancies’. If they find time and would like to extend this discussion they can refer to Nduna, M., & Jewkes,

The conclusions stem directly from the findings of the study and are backed up by the data.

5. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes.
6. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? Yes
7. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? Yes
10. Is the writing acceptable? Yes

"Minor issues"
Line 74 ‘of’ should be ‘on’
Line 121. Paragraph ‘Data Translation and Analysis’ first sentence remove ‘each’

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'