Author’s response to reviews

Title: Sex work stigma and non-disclosure to health care providers: data from a large RDS study among FSW in Brazil

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Sex work stigma and non-disclosure to health care providers: data from a large RDS study among FSW in Brazil

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To the Editors of BMC International Health and Human Rights

Dear Academic Editor – IHHR

We genuinely thank the journal for final the review of our manuscript. Below are the specific comments from the reviewer with responses to each of her query. Thanks for the opportunity to revise our manuscript.

EDITORS’COMMENTS: You should have your manuscript reviewed by someone who is fluent in English.
Authors response: The manuscript has been revised accordingly

Reviewer 3 comment: --Line 291: There is a missing word or something else screwy about the syntax here -- not sure what's meant (see attachment).

Authors response: Discussion section, text was revised: and the confused sentence was deleted “Environments with high stigma against FSW, the fear of discrimination and their consequences can led them the lack access to prevention healthcare services”. Previous Lines 289-290 was deleted

Reviewer 3 comment in the pdf manuscript file: What included group discussions? Thread of the sentence is not coherent.

Authors response: Methods section: included Line 135, page 5: “formative qualitative research with focus groups”

Reviewer 3 comment: Delete slash unless "it means "and/or", which should be stated.

Authors response: Deleted- Methods section: Line 164, page 6

Reviewer 3 comment: Sexual exploitation is not the same thing as exploitation of sex workers. Sentence should perhaps say "the following factors were taken as indicators of human rights violations against FSW:"

Authors response: We amend the text to: Thus, the following factors were taken as indicators of human rights violations against FSW - Methods section: Line 166, page 6.

Reviewers 3 comment: What exactly is "currently established by Brazilian laws" -- should be explained somewhere before this reference. Is it "established" or "prohibited"?
Authors response: Sentence included: Thus, the following factors were taken as indicators of human rights violations against FSW as these are prohibited by labor laws in Brazil were. Methods section: Lines 171, page 6.

Reviewers 3 comment: Discussion-Line 267: Sentence is structurally complicated. The logic of it might be clearer if it were two sentences or otherwise rewritten.

Authors response: Text was amended to: It should be noted that 70% of the FSW interviewed in the present study favored sex work regulations and a possible formal contract providing legal job guarantees. But, only 2% reported having such a work contract. Discussion-Line 267-269, page 10.

Reviewers 3 comment: Discussion-Line 272: Not sure I understand this sentence. What was "driven" -- the targeting system or the Family Health Program? (And why "driven"?)

Authors response: Text was amended to: The Family Health Program is the main approach to provide primary care services within Brazil’s national health system in an effort to also reach underserved communities. Discussion-Line 272-273, page 10.

Reviewers 3 comment: Discussion-Line 279: This is then an excellent system where health workers are more caring and assiduous with sex workers rather than being discriminatory. This story doesn't seem to jibe with the idea that sex workers fear the reaction of health workers to knowing their SW status

Authors response: Previous text Lines 280-284 was deleted and amended to: We speculate that more preventive health services are offered to women who are considered “at higher risk for IST” such as FSW. Discussion-Line 280-281, page 10.

Reviewers 3 comment: Discussion-Line 285-286: can led them the lack access"--??? Something is screwy here.
Authors response: Previous text Lines 285-286 was deleted. Discussion-Line 285, page 11.

Reviewers 3 comment: Again, then your speculation of better care for FSW seems an odd interpretation- Discussion-Line 286.

Authors response: Previous text Lines 286 was deleted. Text was amended to: Furthermore-Discussion-Line 286, page 11.

Reviewers 3 comment: Conclusions Line 234: Again, this seems directly contradictory to your speculation that sex workers are treated with better care when their SW status is known.

Authors response: We amended previous Reviewers’ comments and this sentence is no longer contradictory. Conclusions Line 234 page 12.

All the required Declarations are in the manuscript:
- Ethics approval and consent to participate- Lines 375-378, page 14
- Consent to publish- Lines 379-380, page 14
- Availability of data and materials- Lines 381-382, page 14
- Competing interests- Line 383, page 14
- Funding- Lines 384-386, page 15
- Authors' Contributions- Lines 387-393, page 15
- Acknowledgements- Lines 394-402, page 15

Best regards,
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