Author’s response to reviews

**Title:** Factors associated with the support of pricking (female genital cutting type IV) among Somali immigrants - a cross-sectional study in Sweden

**Authors:**

Anna Wahlberg (anna.wahlberg@kbh.uu.se)

Sara Johnsdotter (sara.johnsdotter@mah.se)

Katarina Ekholm Selling (katarina.selling@kbh.uu.se)

Carina Källestål (carina.kallestal@kbh.uu.se)

Birgitta Essén (birgitta.essen@khb.uu.se)

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**Author’s response to reviews:**

We would like to thank the editor and reviewers for their valuable comments. We have made suggested changes in the manuscript. Below is a point-by-point response to the comments.

1. I searched and searched for some comment about the match between genders of interviewers and participants. You state there were 3 of each men and women, did men interview men and women interview women. Please clarify in the methods section. This and the training necessary for sensitivity are not described adequately.

Response: We agree that these are important aspects to describe and have now clarified these aspects in the manuscript. As you correctly state, there were 3 men and 3 women collecting data. They were not restricted to only interview participants with the same gender as themselves, so men were interviewing both men and women, and women were interviewing both men and women. As the data collectors were both men and women, we analysed whether the gender of the data collector may have influenced the participants’ answers. Male data collectors interviewed 180 participants; of whom 60% were men and 40% women. Female data collectors interviewed 468 participants; of whom 47% were men and 53% women. Interviews where the gender of the data collector and participant was the same had a similar proportion of participants who stated that FGC was acceptable and preferred for daughter as in two-gender interviews. Similar proportions were also observed for the outcome continuation of FGC, except for a female data collector who had a higher proportion of women who said they thought FGC should
continue, and a male data collector who also had a higher proportion of women who stated a support for the continuation of FGC. This information has now been added to the manuscript, see lines 146–147 and lines 300–309.

The training included discussions of the content of the questionnaire, and strategies for recruiting participants. Further, the training also involved discussions on the importance of having a non-judgemental position towards the attitudes expressed by the participants and to inform the participants that the information they provided would be treated with confidentiality. The key informants were also informed about the importance of conducting interviews in a private setting so that no one could overhear what was discussed. Further, as it may be sensitive to disclose positive attitudes towards FGC, the key informants were individuals who are respected within the community and not associated with any authority. This has now been further clarified, see lines 150–159.

2. You did not respond adequately to Reviewer 1’s comment about sampling bias with snowball sampling. You state that you tried to avoid problem of generalizability by using different settings, areas, and cities, but don't directly address the snowballing which occurred in different settings, areas, and cities.

Response: Thank you for pointing this out. The data collection was conducted in several steps. First, the municipalities were purposively selected, and thereafter participants were recruited in Somali organisations, mosques etc. From participants recruited in these settings, snowball sampling was used to reach more participants. This has now been clarified in the methods section (see lines 130–133), and also brought forward as a limitation (see lines 383–386).

3. While you state you agree with Reviewer 1’s comment on qualitative research in the future, you did not include this in your discussion, please discuss/describe next steps for potential research.

Response: Thank you for this suggestion. We have now included information about future research that we believe is needed to further advance the understanding of the practice of pricking (see lines 404–406).