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OPEN PEER REVIEW

Evaluation of Conducting Phone Interviews on Sexual Behavior: An Iranian Population-Based Study

Masoumeh Sadat Mousavi, Mohammad Fararouei, Parvin Afsar Kazerooni, Maryam Nasirian, Haleh Ghaem

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About this report

This open peer review (OPR) report shows the public comments made on this article during peer review, by the reviewers, the associate editor and the editor-in-chief, for every revision round, together with the authors' replies. Comments appear only with the consent of the people who wrote them. Reviewers who chose to sign their report are named; the others are shown as "Referee". Comments are edited for language only, and confidential remarks to the editors are not included.

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1 Original submission

2 comments · 31 Oct 2021 – 6 Nov 2021

Associate Editor

MINOR REVISION 31 Oct 2021

Minor Revision

Associate Editor

MAJOR REVISION 6 Nov 2021

The study assesses the feasibility and validity of phone interviews. The subject is interesting and applicable, especially during COVID-19. However, the author should pay attention to and clarify the following comments:
1. In the abstract, it is mentioned that "The purpose of this study was to investigate the feasibility and validity of phone interviewing using mobile phones to collect sensitive information related to the participant's sexual behavior." However, at the end of the introduction, it is mentioned that "The purpose of this study was to evaluate the response rate of phone interviews about the sexual aspects of the Iranian population." Which one is correct? If the first one is correct, how did you validate this mode of interviewing?
2. As mentioned in the manuscript, prior to the phone interviews, the investigators conducted door-to-door, face-to-face interviews with selected families, which helped justify and prepare them for the interviews. This preparedness was very important in increasing their participation. As you mentioned, we are going to conduct interviews via phone calls due to the sensitivity of the questions and the special conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to avoid direct contact. Also, this would introduce bias into your study, since you prepared them or, to some extent, encouraged them to participate.
3. As you mentioned, the prevalence of STDs was evaluated before your study. I recommend comparing your findings with those of that study to confirm the similarity of both studies and, in fact, the reliability of your study.
4. Also, please attach the questionnaire that you used and information on its validity and reliability, which clearly will impact your findings.
5. Your real response rate was 63.78% and not 92.18%. I think this is low because, by going to their homes, you prepared them in advance, but only about 64% participated.

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Revision 1

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Manuscript reference number: . No. 118708

Title: Evaluation of phone interviews on sex behavior: an Iranian population based study

Dear Dr. Kamran Bagheri Lankarani

Thank you for giving us an opportunity to revise our paper we would like to submit for publication in Shiraz E-Medical Journal. We are grateful to the reviewers and the Editors for their constructive and positive comments on our paper. We have addressed each of the comments in our revision, which has improved the article further. Below we detail our changes and respond to each of the comments in turn.

Best

Comments from the Editors and Reviewers:

Reviewer

My comments are attached.

Regards

Authors

Thank you for the most important recommendation. We added additional information based on the comments mentioned in the attached file, each part's corrections were done in the article file and can be seen as track changes, and is given in the table below.

Q : Reviewer	R:Authors
In the abstract it is mentioned that "The purpose of this study was to investigate the feasibility and validity of phone interviewing using mobile phones to collect sensitive information related to the participant's sexual behavior." However, at the end of the introduction, it is mentioned that "The purpose of this study was to evaluate the response rate of phone interviews about the sexual aspects of the Iranian population." Which one is correct? If the first one is correct, how did you validate this route of the interview?	Thank you for the most important recommendation. The purpose of this study was to investigate the feasibility and validity of phone interviewing using mobile phones to collect sensitive information related to the participant's sexual behavior." According to the level of access to people using the phone, answering the phone, the willingness to participate in the study and cooperation in answering and answering sensitive questions, this goal was examined. And We edited introduction.
As it is mentioned in the manuscript, prior to the phone interview the investigators did a door-to-door and face-to-face interview with selected families that is helped them to be justified and prepared for the interview and this preparedness was very important to increase their participation. As you mentioned we are going to interview via phone call due to the sensitivity of the questions and especial condition during the COVID-19 pandemic and avoid direct contact. Also, it would be a bias for your study since you prepared them or to some extent encourage them to participate.	Thank you for the most important recommendation. This study was performed before the covid 19 pandemic. However, the results of this study showed that during the covid 19 pandemic, when people are in quarantine and it is not possible to use face-to-face questioning, we can use telephone questioning to conduct research. One of the reasons we did the door-to-door interview was to get people's cell phone numbers, and due to the sensitivity of the questions, it was not possible to use the landline to ask questions.
As you mentioned the prevalence of STDs has been evaluated before your study, I recommend comparing your finding with that study to approve the similarity of both studies and in fact reliability of your study.	Thank you for the most important recommendation. The prevalence of syndromes associated with sexually transmitted infections was one step in this study. After asking about sensitive questions, people were asked about sexually transmitted infections syndromes. The article on the prevalence of syndromes in the population was published before this article(20).

Also, please attach the questionnaire that you used and its validity and reliability that clearly will impact your finding.	Thank you for the most important recommendation. In this study, we used a researcher-made checklist to conduct a survey. The questionnaire was not used.
your real response rate was 63.78% and not 92.18% that I think this is low because through going their home you prepared them in advance but only about 64% participated.	Thank you for the most important recommendation. This number indicates that 63.87% of the people were available at the time of the survey. And 36% did not have access to them for reasons such as unavailability, non-response to the call, incorrect phone number. And since people did not know the nature of the questions before answering the call, it does not cause bias. But the results showed that after the person answers the phone and is informed about the type and purpose of the study, the response rate is 92.18%.

2 Revision 1

1 comment · 6 Dec 2021

Associate Editor

ACCEPT 6 Dec 2021

The revised version and authors' reply were convincing. So, the manuscript is now suitable to be published.