

Supplementary Table 1.

Women's perception of how well their VEs were managed.

| ITEM | Statement | Strongly disagree | | Disagree | | No strong view | | Agree | | Strongly agree | | Mean | SD |
|------|---|-------------------|---|----------|------|----------------|-----|-------|------|----------------|-----|------|------|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | | |
| 1 | The staff gave me excellent information about VEs | 0 | 0 | 48 | 24 | 3 | 1.5 | 149 | 74.5 | 0 | 0 | 3.50 | 0.85 |
| 2 | I felt I could always refuse a VE ^L | 2 | 1 | 152 | 76 | 6 | 3 | 40 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 2.42 | 0.81 |
| 3 | The staff always asked my permission before performing a VE | 0 | 0 | 81 | 40.5 | 8 | 4 | 111 | 55.5 | 0 | 0 | 3.15 | 0.97 |
| 4 | VEs were always performed with great Sensitivity ^H | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 13 | 6.5 | 180 | 90 | 3 | 1.5 | 3.91 | 0.39 |
| 5 | The subject of VEs was never properly discussed ^{*L} | 0 | 0 | 33 | 16.5 | 13 | 6.5 | 153 | 76.5 | 1 | 0.5 | 2.39 | 0.76 |
| 6 | VEs were done with dignity ^H | 0 | 0 | 16 | 8 | 10 | 5 | 172 | 86 | 2 | 1 | 3.80 | 0.58 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|-----|------|----|-----|-----|------|---|-----|------|------|
| 7 | I felt that I always gave my consent before a VE was carried out | 0 | 0 | 30 | 15 | 9 | 4.5 | 160 | 80 | 1 | 0.5 | 3.66 | 0.73 |
| 8 | I always felt well supported during the VE ^H | 0 | 0 | 16 | 8 | 16 | 8 | 167 | 83.5 | 1 | 0.5 | 3.76 | 0.59 |
| 9 | Privacy was always maintained during VE ^H | 0 | 0 | 11 | 5.5 | 13 | 6.5 | 175 | 87.5 | 1 | 0.5 | 3.83 | 0.51 |
| 10 | VEs caused me great embarrassment* | 0 | 0 | 73 | 36.5 | 9 | 4.5 | 113 | 56.5 | 5 | 2.5 | 2.75 | 0.98 |
| 11 | During each VE, I was always told what was happening | 0 | 0 | 55 | 27.5 | 13 | 6.5 | 130 | 65 | 2 | 1 | 3.39 | 0.90 |
| 12 | I did not find VE distressing ^L | 4 | 2 | 171 | 85.5 | 3 | 1.5 | 22 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 2.21 | 0.65 |
| 13 | Thinking back over my labor, I was given too many vaginal examinations* | 0 | 0 | 55 | 27.5 | 6 | 3 | 132 | 66 | 7 | 3.5 | 2.54 | 0.93 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|-----|----|-----|---|-----|----|-----|---|-----|------|-----|
| 14 | Coping with VEs caused me great anxiety*. | 1 | 0.5 | 56 | 28 | 5 | 2.5 | 13 | 66 | 6 | 3 | 2.57 | 0.9 |
| | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | 4 |
| 15 | VEs were far more unpleasant than I ever imagined* ^L | 1 | 0.5 | 47 | 23. | 1 | 5.5 | 13 | 69. | 2 | 1 | 2.53 | 0.8 |
| | | | | | 5 | 1 | | 9 | 5 | | | | 7 |
| 16 | I found VE painful* ^L | 0 | 0 | 31 | 15. | 7 | 3.5 | 15 | 79 | 4 | 2 | 2.32 | 0.7 |
| | | | | | 5 | | | 8 | | | | | 5 |
| 17 | I wish the staff had explained more about VEs* | 1 | 0.5 | 12 | 62 | 3 | 16 | 43 | 21. | 0 | 0 | 3.41 | 0.8 |
| | | | | 4 | | 2 | | | 5 | | | | 2 |
| 18 | The information gained from VE was reassuring | 1 | 0.5 | 43 | 21. | 1 | 7 | 14 | 70 | 2 | 1 | 3.49 | 0.8 |
| | | | | | 5 | 4 | | 0 | | | | | 5 |
| 19 | The information gained from VE caused me anxiety* | 2 | 1 | 12 | 63. | 2 | 12 | 46 | 23 | 1 | 0.5 | 3.41 | 0.8 |
| | | | | 7 | 5 | 4 | | | | | | | 6 |
| 20 | I felt the VE was roughly handled at time ^{H*} | 2 | 1 | 16 | 83. | 2 | 10. | 10 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 3.80 | 0.5 |
| | | | | 7 | 5 | 1 | 5 | | | | | | 2 |

* Negatively worded statements.

^H Highest means score.

^L Lowest means score.