Reviewer's report

Title: Discrimination in relation to parenthood reported by community psychiatric service users in the UK: a framework analysis

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Reviewer: Shirli Werner

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Discrimination in relation to parenthood reported by community psychiatric service users in the UK: A framework analysis

I have been asked to review the above stated manuscript. This manuscript aims to generate a typology of community psychiatric service users’ reports of mental illness-based discrimination in relation to becoming or being a parent. The article claims to be the first to examine experienced discrimination in the context of parenthood and offers an interesting framework to understand these issues.

I do have some comments on the various parts of the manuscript which I think may aid in its clarity:

1. ABSTRACT – In the 7th line, "is" is not necessary.

Within the methods section (and also in the manuscript itself) I think the authors should also make note of the quantitative data that is examined.

2. BACKGROUND – The concept of "experienced discrimination" is not entirely clear to this reviewer. The authors make note in their discussion section of previous manuscripts which have found that parents are concerned about being perceived and treated as bad or unfit (sources 27, 28). However, these are not provided within the background and the case is made that no studies have examined experienced discrimination (beyond prevalence). Are the cited studies not examples of experienced discrimination?

3. METHODS – The explanation of the participants section is not complete in my opinion. It is not clear how many participants participated? How many of them were already parents? How many were not parents?

The response rate in this section is very low. Although the authors acknowledge this within the limitation section, I wonder what this response rate implies in terms of the reliability of the findings. In addition, the authors state that the sample is random, but do not provide sufficient information to explain how it was recruited to be random, and given the low response rate I am not sure if it can be claimed that the sample is indeed random.

The authors provide a good encompassing explanation of the qualitative analyses that are performed, but should also consider talking about the few quantitative analyses that are shown within the first table.
4. RESULTS – The results section could be written in a clearer fashion. I did not find the figure self-explanatory and believe that possibly adding quotes within the results section itself (not just in the supplementary material) may aid in making the results more accessible. I would have appreciated a deeper explanation as to how the figure was conceptualized. Further, I found it difficult to follow when the authors were relating to a themes, or a sub-themes and to differentiate between them. In addition, the authors claim that the 304 participants were selected as they reported experiencing some level of discrimination. However, in Table 1 we see that 41% rated "not applicable" for starting a family and 14% for role as a parent (others also rated only a little). What does this mean? Is it not applicable because they were not parents? Or did they not experience this type of discrimination? In either case, why are these individuals counted within the 304 individuals? Within the table itself "not applicable" is shown twice within "starting a family", the first time together with the category of "not at all". I assume that this is a mistake and should be removed from this category.

5. DISCUSSION – The first page of the discussion is partially repetitive of the results section and could be shortened. On the other hand, I feel that this section needs to expand its discussion of the results. The sentence on page 11 "the literature on father’s experiences of parenting is limited" seems to belong more within a background section rather than in the discussion.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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