Reviewer's report

Title: 'We call it the shaking illness': perceptions and experiences of Parkinson's disease in rural northern Tanzania

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Reviewer: Elialilia S. Okello

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1. Minor Compulsory Revision

Introduction
Thank you for giving me an opportunity to review this interesting article. I did a quick internet search and I found out that there are extremely few studies that have attempted to explore Parkinson’s disease from social science perspective in Africa. If published, the manuscript will make substantial contribution to this gray area there is very little research done on social aspect of Parkinson’s disease in Africa.

The quotations reproduced in the findings section is evidence that this manuscript is based on primary data collected from the field. Therefore the manuscript can stand on its own merits as an original work.

Clarity of the research question:
The objective of the paper is stated in the abstract at the very beginning of the manuscript and it read: “There are no Parkinson’s disease (PD) social science studies published from Africa. This paper presents findings from a qualitative study on how PD is perceived and treated in a rural Tanzanian setting” To me it is only the last sentence that seems to tell the reader what the manuscript is all about. I will recommend that the authors either transfers the first sentence to the introduction which apparently is missing from the abstract or delete the sentence altogether.

Appropriateness of methods:
The study methodology and methods of data collection were appropriate. The method section is well described with sufficient detail on methods of data collection and data sources.

Soundness of the data
The data were sound as evidenced by the quotations used. However, data from some of the source is not reflected in the finding section. For instance the authors tell the reader that data sources included Traditional healers, health workers and community members, but from the quotation used a reader gets a feeling that the voice of these group of respondents is lacking. One would love to know whether all these data were used in this article or not.
Adherence to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition

The manuscript adheres to qualitative data reporting standard. The authors chose to report the finding by data source, which the approach best suited for data that used multiple sources. However, as noted above following this approach of data presentation the reader would have expected to see findings from the entire data source described in the method section. But the manuscript is silent about some of the data sources as evidenced by the quotations used.

Under the theme: treatment seeking, the authors mention in passing the issue limited or lack of access to treatment. To me this is an important issue that deserved more attention.

Discussion and conclusions

The discussion section is well written. However, as indicated above the issue of lack of access to treatment for PD is an important issue in resource limited settings like Tanzania. One would have loved to see it come up in the discussion, unfortunately this did not happen. I would recommend that the authors comment on the issue of lack of access to treatment, and may be provide some recommendation on how the issue should be dealt with.

Study limitations: The limitation of the study are clearly stated

Acknowledgements: The authors clearly acknowledged works both published and unpublished upon which they have build the current work and this particular manuscript.

Comprehensiveness of the abstract

Generally the abstract conveys what was found out. But as mentioned above the abstract needs polishing especially the objective which needs to be stated more clearly

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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