Reviewer’s report

Title: Inclusion of Men in Maternal and Safe Motherhood Services in Inner-city Communities in Ghana: evidence from a descriptive cross-sectional survey

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Reviewer: Akira Shibanuma

Reviewer's report:

This article assessed the level of involvement in reproductive and maternal health services by men as the partners of women who were pregnant or delivered within five years of the survey. While I believe that this topic is important in improving the health of women and children, the manuscript has the following critical drawbacks. I would be grateful if the authors could consider them.

[Major comments]

Introduction

1. In Introduction, the authors did not describe why male's involvement is important in reproductive and maternal health as well as safe motherhood.

2. In Introduction, the authors did not discuss why this study is necessary. In this sense, the authors failed to justify why they carried out this study.

3. According to the guideline of BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth, the authors should have used the term "Background" instead of "Introduction" (https://bmcpregnancychildbirth.biomedcentral.com/submission-guidelines/preparing-your-manuscript/research-article).

Methods

4. The authors did not provide the demographic information on the study site, including information on the sampling units such as the numbers of houses, households, and respondents in the study site. Thus, I cannot assess if the sampling was done appropriately.

5. The following description is confusing: "purposive or simple random samplings were used to select household respondents." It may imply that different sampling methods were used as ad-hoc basis.
6. The authors did not describe the definitions of variables. If the authors used variables on the knowledge and practices related to reproductive and maternal health based on those used in previous articles, then they should mention them.

7. The authors did not mention pre-testing. Was it done?

8. I wonder the information on "Study population" was appropriate or not. Men with wife/partner were pregnant, especially early stage of pregnancy, might not have planned delivery yet.

9. I wonder if the sample size calculation is needed since the authors did not involve any inferential statistics methods, including significance testing.

Results

10. Some table and figure numbers in the body text did not match those in Tables and Figures.

11. Regarding men's inclusion in antenatal care, the authors did not present key information such as the coverage of antenatal care among wives/partners of the respondents and the percentage of respondents who went to antenatal care with their wives/partners. Readers may not know if the lack of knowledge or practices was due to lack of antenatal visit or failure in translating knowledge obtained during antenatal visit into practices.

12. Regarding men's inclusion in antenatal care, "Participants' understand of FP" seems that a respondent was asked to choose only one from the list while there may exist two appropriate answers. What was the authors' intention to ask the question this way? By "Choosing only one answer" strategy, respondents with partial knowledge may be categorized into "he has knowledge."

13. Likewise, regarding men's inclusion in delivery care, "Respondents' knowledge on importance of ANC" seems that a respondent was asked to choose only one from the list while there may exist many appropriate answers. Why? What was the authors' intention to ask the question this way? By "Choosing only one answer" strategy, respondents with partial knowledge may be categorized into "he has knowledge."

14. Men's inclusion in antenatal care and delivery care may be heavily influenced by whether wives/partners completed delivery or still in pregnancy. In addition, if they were in the pregnancy stage, gestational age may matter. The authors did not control for them or stratify the answers by them. Readers may not be able to verify the low level of knowledge or practices was because they were not in the stage of experiences such cares or they were in the stage of receiving such cares (but did not receive).
Discussions and conclusions

15. I have an impression that the authors cannot simply conclude that "there was high knowledge of family planning" or "there was knowledge on the importance of ANC" because of my comments No. 12 and 13.

16. Since the study was conducted in a sub-national area that many readers do not know, it would be helpful if the authors interpreting the results by introducing the social, cultural, religious, or economic characteristics of respondents and study site.

17. It would be helpful if the limitations of this study were clearly discussed.

18. In conclusion, the authors stated that "the study reveals a huge gap between knowledge and practice of safe motherhood." I wonder why the authors suddenly limit the major findings to safe motherhood while safe motherhood was only part of your findings in Results and Discussions.

[Minor comments]

19. Different reference styles were applied in the body text.

20. Abbreviations were not consistently used. If abbreviation is used, the authors should spell out the word at the first appearance in the manuscript and then use the abbreviation.

21. The use of some technical terms is not consistent (for example, Ante-Natal care or antenatal care).

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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