Author’s response to reviews

Title: Male Partner Antenatal Clinic Attendance is Associated with Increased Uptake of Maternal Health Services and Infant BCG Immunization A National Survey in Kenya

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Author’s response to reviews:

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From:
Beryne Odeny

To:
Editorial team,
BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth

RE: Response to Reviewers: PRCH-D-19-00540- Male Partner Antenatal Clinic Attendance is Associated with Increased Uptake of Maternal Health Services and Infant BCG Immunization A
We thank the reviewers for their helpful input. Please see responses to the reviewer comments below. The responses have been typed in bold.

1. Comments by Maxine Whittaker, MBBS MPH PhD (Reviewer 1)

   • The major problem I have is that some of the relationships have very wide confidence intervals which could mean: we have little knowledge about the effect, and that further information is needed.; that your sample size was too small.; etc. That means that one has to interpret these findings - on BCG ARV use for PMTCT are not ones that you can now confidently say it is so - you have not discussed this in your paper. So caution here please.

   Response:

   Thank you for the point you have raised. We agree with the concern raised and we have added this in our limitations section (page 12 line 96-100) as follows:

   “While we found that male partner ANC attendance was associated with increased likelihood of BCG immunization uptake and ARV use for PMTCT, the confidence intervals are wide indicating that estimates should be interpreted with caution. However, the results are consistent with other published literature that report a positive association between male partner involvement and maternal and child health outcomes.”

   • Please clarify: page 7 line 39 - was there a confounding of recent relationships being first child and therefore more concern than long relationships meaning have had a few children so less concerned? (also page 12 line 89 when discussing confounding).

   Response:

   Thank you for this comment. We decided a priori to adjust all multivariate models for age, which is also associated with several other variables, including relationship duration and number of children. We decided to adjust models for age because it would most efficiently control for confounding by the above-mentioned variables. Neither the strength nor the magnitude of association changed significantly (indicating no confounding) when adding additional variables in the multivariate models.
• Page 10 line 34: This is a reported increased attendance based on reported simple request

Response:

Thank you for this observation. Yes, this data is as reported by the mother. The sentence has been updated to indicate as such. It now reads:

“Analysis of self-reported information revealed that mothers’ simply requesting their partners to attend ANC increased their partners’ likelihood of attending ANC 13-fold.”

• Reference 25 is quite old - is there no more recent materials?

Response:

Your comment is appreciated. Three recent references have been added: Reference 26-28.

• Reference 36 - incomplete date

Response:

Thank you for this comment. The date is now complete and reads May 23, 2019.

• Some editing: line 26 "than those asked NOT TO attend"

Response:

Thank you. This has been edited as suggested.

2. Comments by Susan M. Walsh, DNP, PNP (Reviewer 2)

• I think the authors might have suggested a few more conclusions as their data was strong.

Response:

Thank you for this comment. Additional statements have been added in the conclusions section (line 4-9) as follows:

“It is possible to increase male partner ANC attendance regardless of HIV status. This strategy should to be pursued given the benefits conferred to maternal child health. Concerted programmatic efforts are needed to support mothers in inviting their partners to ANC, with
special considerations for women who experience intimate partner violence and those of low socioeconomic status for whom engaging male partners may be especially challenging.”

Please note that one of the co-author’s, Christine McGrath's, affiliation has been updated and highlighted in track changes in the revised manuscript.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Beryne Odeny.