Author’s response to reviews

Title: Magnitude and factors associated with Intimate Partner Violence in Mainland Tanzania

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you for giving us another opportunity to revise and submit this manuscript to the Journal for possible publication. We have reviewed all issues and suggestions given to us by both Reviewers. We are very grateful to Reviewer #1 for very constructive comments and many suggestions. We have adhered to all suggestions and revised the manuscript accordingly. Further, we thank Reviewer #3 yet for their questions, clarifications and suggestions.

To all Reviewers, we are attaching responses as required.

Sincerely,
REVIEWER #1

1 Main concerns

To change from Gender-Based Violence (GBV) to intimate partner violence

We agree to this suggestion. Changes have been effected

All over the manuscript

2 To introduce factors associated with IPV by using Ecological framework

We have used the Haise publication to introduce violence against women ecological model. The beginning of third paragraph in the Background

3a Wrong interpretation of global prevalence of IPV

The prevalence has been revised and additional suggested reference has been used in the Background section (third sentence).

3b Wrong interpretation of DHS estimates

Instead of saying by the time they were 15 years, we have changed to “since age 15” as suggested by the reviewer. Background, second paragraph, last sentence.

3c Misquoting the % of women experiencing sexual violence

We have revised the % of women experiencing sexual violence to put the correct figure of 20% (20.3%). Background, second paragraph, last sentence.

3d Elaborate and justify the study design said to be ‘quasi-experimental’ study.

More explanations have been added to qualify the study design. Study design: First paragraph, second sentence
Authors should control for age, education and marital status in the regressions. We have stated the control procedures of the three demographic variables when running the logistic regression models. Under Data analysis, last two sentences.

"Emotional violence was not statistically significant different from other forms" not clear. The statement has been revised. It appears under Intimate partner violence subsection of the results, last three sentences of the first paragraph.

The wording related to women’s perpetration is too strong. The suggestion has been taken on board. Also, we have also included the suggested reference (Kishor and Bradley, 2012) in the discussion. The suggestion that has been worked on is found on page 8 being the opening sentence in the third paragraph under intimate partner violence.

Re-work Table 3 and add Table 4. We have created another descriptive table for prevalence of women perpetration and formed Table 4 that has predictors of perpetration. Table 3 and Table 4.

Collinearity of IPV and perpetration. We have dropped the idea of having exposure to IPV predicting perpetration. But none of the background variables predicts perpetration. Table 4.

Where standard errors adjusted for? Standard errors were adjusted for using the robust estimation of variances. Mentioned in the methods section (last paragraph).

Add a discussion within context of existing estimates. We have included the DHS study and the Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women. Under Discussion: second paragraph.
Minor points

1. Missing page numbers: This was an over-insight. Page numbers have been inserted.

2. “..disregards age, education…” unclear: The sentence has been rephrased. Page 3, last paragraph, second sentence.

3. Controlling GBV is awkward: “Controlling GBV” has been changed to “preventing and reducing IPV.” Last sentence on page 4.

4. Wording of “should have been partnered” should be changed: The wording has been changed as suggested. Study design: second paragraph, second sentence.

5. “it was put clear” is not awkward: The phrase has been changed. Second sentence, under Process.

6. Change “even before the partner abusing them”: We have changed these words to “when the partner was not already abusing them.” Last sentence under Measures.

7. Remove “binary” before logistic: The word “binary” has been removed. Second sentence under Data analysis.

8. Change a sentence “The strength of the association…”: A change has been made. Last sentence under Data analysis.

9. Combine “Ethical consideration” with Process: Ethical consideration has been moved to the Process sub-section. Next paragraph below Process.
Lack of conceptual clarity on what constitute GBV. Since we have changed from GBV to intimate partner violence (IPV), we think this problem does no longer exist.

Lack of a research question The last paragraph of the Background, introduces the research question and main objective

Use of different time frame to assess frequency of IPV It is true that we used different time frame (within a month, between one month and three months and beyond three months). In one occasion, we were trying to assess current exposure and lifetime exposures. Interviewing techniques allow to ‘probe’ rather than jumping directly to a
question. Such data, though not all have been used in this paper, there is an extended potential use of this information.

4 Definition of ‘current’ and lifetime experience of IPV In the Measures, we have included the operational definition of ‘current’ and ‘lifetime’ exposure to IPV

Additional comments

Alcohol consumption: a risk factor During a review of literature (after data collection), we came across alcohol being mentioned a risk factor for IPV. Unfortunately, during data collection, we were not able to capture behaviors of alcohol consumption. Nevertheless, it is not clear about the mechanism through which alcohol influence IPV (Haise – 1998).

Data on alcohol consumption are not available in the current study

Approval from the Institutional Review Board to conduct the study The IRB reviewed and granted permission to conduct the study First paragraph, first sentence under Ethical consideration

Sampling: How was a respondent selected? A random sample of one adult (ever partnered – 25 to 50 years) in a household was selected. Among the exclusion criteria were illiterate (those not able to read and write Kiswahili, a national language), too ill (mentally or physically) to participate in the project, project staff (for example, trainers in the area). Such criteria do not appear in the manuscript to avoid a lengthy description of the sampling process but were available in the protocol.

Process: How we ensured safety of study participants and of interviewers? The study was approved by the local government authorities. Local leaders provided ‘field guides’ whose one of the responsibilities was to enhance security to both study participants and interviewers.

Process: Wasn’t it likely study participants to know each other? In one household, we selected ONLY one study participant. Not more than one study participants came from
one household. Interviews were strictly confidential. Therefore, there was no possibility of spill-over of information.

Tools: What modification was done? While in the DHS, physical and sexual violence questions are all in one section, we separated sections: one on emotional, the other on physical violence and the last one on sexual violence. The flow of how one asks a question is very important to put a potential victim at ease. Then, in each section, we asked about incidence and frequency.

Discussion: lack of association of IPV and socio-demographic characteristics Lack of association has been put in the discussion section. Please note that, it is not only in this paper that no association with IPV found. This is a basis of an ecological model as suggested by Haise LL (1998).

Conclusions: Overall finding

“Serious implications” regarding violence against women This statement has been removed and has been replaced with another piece of discussion

Discuss specific implications In the discussion and conclusion sections we have argued on the possible implications