Reviewer’s report

Title: Home based records for poor mothers and children in Afghanistan, a cross sectional population based study

Version: 1 Date: 31 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Marzieh Araban

Reviewer’s report:

Please include all comments for the authors in this box rather than uploading your report as an attachment. Please only upload as attachments annotated versions of manuscripts, graphs, supporting materials or other aspects of your report which cannot be included in a text format.

Please overwrite this text when adding your comments to the authors.

Title: considering the fact that the study did not have any follow-up, the type of study seems to be a cross-sectional study.

Abstract: the method section should clearly explain the measurement.

Introduction: this part is messy. You should focus on the problem and explain why such a study is needed. Why integrating MCH HBR in the complex environment of rural Afghanistan is needed. Is there any problem with utilization of MCH care? What the study added to the body of literature.

Method section: please either adhere to guidelines for reporting cross-sectional studies, or if you do believe that the study is a trial, give an appropriate reference for this type of study, then adhere to the consort statements.

Intervention: how were the contents of the handbook validated?

There are some vague issues regarding inclusion criteria, in line 59-60 it was said that women who had a child born in the past six month, while in the intervention it has been stated that, Women were eligible to receive a handbook if they were pregnant or had a child born in the past 24 months. It raises a question, who was eligible to receive the handbook? Are the contents of handbook were applicable for two local languages; Dari and Pashto? Who delivered the handbooks to participants? Is the materials of handbook were comprehensive and compressible for all participants? how about usability of handbook women with complicated pregnancies?

What do you mean by "study area in the poorest two quintiles compared to the least poor three quintiles"? How these poorest quintiles were defined? Did you have any standard measure? How the poor and rich families were defined?
Some explanation regarding routine MCH care in Afghanistan is necessary. The characteristics of care providers are necessary.

Results:

Tables are not self-explanatory. Please remove un-necessary sections. I think the subtitle "MCH handbook use by health care providers" is not suitable for the explanations under the section.

Discussion: this part needs severe revision. You should focus on the study results the compare by similar studies.

Limitation part should be re-moved from discussion. It could be stated as a sub section under discussion part.

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

Yes

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

Yes

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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Acceptable

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