Reviewer's report

Title: Listening to their voices: understanding rural women's perceptions of good delivery care at the Mibilizi District Hospital in Rwanda

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Reviewer: ISAAC A BABARINSA

Reviewer's report:

1. This is a valuable study, although somewhat flawed in design and execution, and consequently the conclusions drawn.

2. The main issues with this study extends beyond the 'several limitations' described by the authors. The Principle (or principal) Investigator, who undertook the field research is male. All the respondents were female. In African and other paternalistic settings, this in itself will distort the narrative and content and subtle under-disclosure. Secondly, although there are doctors in this setting, none of them was interviewed. This says a lot, as they may be part of the problem! Indeed, this makes the 'triangulation' inadequate. It is almost impossible that the Head Midwife with whom the questions were crosschecked, did not know the Midwife-respondents. So I can imagine her admonishing a junior respondent: "Who said that the women share beds?". We are not told why Mibilizi Hospital was chosen out of 39, and if the findings from this study could in some way reflect the picture in other parts of Rwanda.

3. I see no reason for Table 1. If the authors want it, it could be inserted as a statement.

4. Transcriptions from in-depth interviews should (ideally) be verbatim. I am not sure therefore that this was the case, with words thrown in such as: 'isn't'...'ANC'...'couldn't reach'; and one phrase such as..'labour ward to theater'. Did the respondents really use those words? Then, they must have had at least high school education.

5. I also find it puzzling that the Midwife respondents had such an impressive vocabulary, such as: 'tempestuous'--which is rather far-fetched and inappropriate in this circumstance, 'abject poverty strata'...'national wealth household categorization'.
6. Although it is stated in the abstract that content analysis was performed by using Nvivo software, no further reference of use, adaptation or challenges in the study was made again. (See: Zamawe FC. The implication of using Nvivo software in qualitative data analysis: evidence-based reflection. Malawi Medical Journal 2015, 27(1) 13-15.)

7. Finally, the discussion repeatedly veers-off the specific findings of this study, and there are hints of confirmation bias.

**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.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**  
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Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**  
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Not relevant to this manuscript

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