Reviewer’s report

Title: Title: Can mental health treatments help prevent or reduce intimate partner violence in low- and middle-income countries? A systematic review

Version: 0 Date: 02 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Gene S Feder

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This is a systematic review of LMIC controlled studies of mental health interventions that measured IPV outcomes. From the 6 heterogeneous studies that were eligible for the review, it was impossible to draw any conclusions about effectiveness. There was a hint that interventions for depression may reduce IPV, but the authors wisely do not over-egg this finding from two primary studies.

The review was comprehensive in terms of search strategy and competent in application of ex/inclusion criteria, data extraction, evaluation of bias risk and (the necessarily limited) analysis. The reviewers' critique of methodology is appropriate and helpful to this research field. The major limitation, given the global ambitions of the review, was restriction to papers published in English. It would be useful to know how many abstracts of potentially eligible studies were identified. As abstracts from French, German and other non-English journals are usually in English, this should be within the language competence of the reviewers.

In their textual summary of findings from the primary studies, the reviewers do not clearly distinguish between measurements of perpetration and victimisation. This outcome measurement ambiguity to some extent (looking at the tables) tracks back to the studies themselves, as does insufficient characterisation of their populations in terms of perpetration and victimisation. Needless to say, that distinction is not always straightforward, but I think perpetration/victimisation measurement and characterisation in the primary studies needs more discussion in the review.

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?  
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Yes

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Acceptable

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