Author's response to reviews

Title: Male Reproductive Health Challenges: Appraisal of Wives' Coping Strategies

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Author's response to reviews:
Point-by-point response

Background

Query on the statements identified as ‘strong statements’.

Response

The statements are actually vital to the relevance of this study and citations are available. These citations have been inserted appropriately as follows in the body of the text: example include the following in paragraph 2 of introduction:

These conditions, depending on their nature, if left untreated, could affect man’s wellness (16,17) with great consequences on marital relationship (4,16,17) and disruptions in other areas of life (4,16–19). Although these conditions may not be life-threatening (15,17), they are rarely reported (4,20,21) and are associated with social stigma (15,17), especially in Nigeria where sexuality discussions are sacrosanct (4,8).

Introduction
Query on references for the statement “However, studies that have documented the coping strategies in instances of reproductive health challenges in Nigeria, especially by qualitative assessment are rare”.

Response

Our claim of rarity of qualitative study on this subject in Nigeria still subsists. We therefore seem not to have reference for what is not available. However, for better clarity, we have substituted the statement with the below statement and inserted appropriately as the concluding statement of Para 1 in the Introduction section:

However, studies that have documented the coping strategies that the wives employed in instances of husbands’ sexual challenges in Nigeria, especially in terms of qualitative assessment, are not currently noticeable in the literature.

Query No 2

The disorders have been listed in one statement as advised by the reviewer

Male reproductive health challenges are a range of disorders that affect the male reproductive system. These include penis disorders, erectile dysfunction, balanitis (swelling of the foreskin/penis head), prostate cancer, genital ulcers, testicular disorders, low sperm count, painful or premature ejaculation, loss of libido, prostate cancer, urethral discharge, and sexually transmitted infections (12–15). These conditions, depending on their nature, if left untreated, could affect man’s wellness (16,17) with great consequences on marital relationship (4,16,17) and disruptions in other areas of life (4,16–19). Although these conditions may not be life-threatening (15,17), they are rarely reported (4,20,21) and are associated with social stigma (15,17), especially in Nigeria where sexuality discussions are sacrosanct (4,8).

Query No 3 and Response

The ‘litany’ of prevalence and mortality rates of different disorders has been summarised, leaving only the few relevant points. This summary was however merged with the next paragraph.

There has been a global increase in male sexual disorders (4,19,20,22,23), and more than three out of every 10 Nigerian men have been reported of having some degree of erectile dysfunction or other sexual problems (8,15,17,20,21,24). Although, the prevalence of sexual disorder among men (e.g. prostate cancer) is also high in other countries such as India, the reported mortality due to the disease is high in Nigeria when compared with other countries (22,25). Sexual dysfunction threatens men’s wellbeing and the future of their families (20,21,26). It has implications for both men and their intimate partners (16,20,21,21). In African traditional system, where conjugal union is sacrosanct and always envisioned to be harmonious and expected to culminate in the bearing of children, strategies for enduring or sustaining such structure are essential (8,27). The incidence of marital instability, disruption and disintegration, and the conflict resulting in violence or separation have increased (4,18,20). Specifically, husband-wife conflict affects the
family relationship and has damaging social and economic consequences (4,16). While several factors have been suspected to be responsible for the husband-wife conflict, the impact of husband’s reproductive health problems have not been properly documented (26,28,29).

Query on Validity and integrity of the data

The two unclear statements in this section have been represented for better understanding as follows:

The transcripts were reviewed by other non members of our team but colleagues who have experience in qualitative studies. This is to ensure multiple reading, in detecting of further themes, to check that all transcriptions follow the same verbatim patterns and to ensure there is no bias in our identification of common themes.

Recommendations

The below statement has been added to the recommendation as suggested by the Reviewer.

The men should also be encouraged to seek treatment and share their sexual challenges with their spouses/partners

References

Additional references included the following:
