Reviewer’s report

Title: Development of a tool to measure person-centered maternity care in developing settings: Validation in a rural and urban Kenyan population

Version: 0 Date: 13 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Joshua Vogel

Reviewer's report:

Many thanks for opportunity to review this important paper.

My overall impression is very positive, this is an important paper that should be published.

I do not feel sufficiently knowledge on methodology/statistics of tool development and validation to comment on these sections of Methods/Results, however I have no major concerns. A statistician's review is warranted.

MAJOR POINTS

Methods:

My main query regarding the analysis is the use of multiple languages. Certainly English and local languages are needed in this setting, however it is possible that different languages / nuances may have contributed to differences in rates of occurrence. Could you please clarify:

- was any translation / back-translation step done to assess the veracity of the translation? How did you assess whether the translated questions adequately reflected the questions used in the English version?

- did you test for any differences in reported occurrences by language (not just rural vs urban), and if so, were there any meaningful differences?

- I think it would be helpful to include the N, % of women completing different language versions in table 1.
Sections 3. Expert review and 4 cognitive interviews (India component) are not described in sufficient detail - by comparison, the cognitive interview section in Kenya is much more detailed. It is important to indicate the number of participants, formats used (small group, in-depth interview, focus group, survey etc), setting and other salient methodological information.

Page 11 line 27 - could you clarify how the women were sampled? Was it the first 20, in terms of oldest to most recent date of delivery? Or randomly sampled from records available?

Page 11 line 42 - incentive would constitute an inducement to participate. Perhaps you mean "gift" here?

Page 12 line 4 - was there any change in the structure, contents or format of the tool between the rural and urban settings? I see a different platform was used (RedCap vs Survey CTO) - was that the only difference?

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

Useful also to mention that there currently is no gold-standard tool in this area of work, hence the PCMC tool cannot be validated against a gold standard test as part of performance assessment.

MINOR POINTS:

METHODS:

Page 10 line 56 - this "small sample of women" is a convenience sample? If so, I would indicate in text.

Page 12 line 11 - was there a particular reason why the length of time after delivery was different between the two surveys?

Page 12 line 58 - I am not sure if "quality" is the correct term here, as you are talking about an ordinal scale, perhaps "levels" is a better term?

Page 13, line 22 - I think "optimize" is a better term here than "assure"
DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

Pg 22 line 45 - I would argue it is not so much a "subjective decision", as that the concepts and domains themselves are overlapping/continuous rather than discrete.

Some of the wording of the items (eg Table 2) is somewhat "composite" eg: the verbal abuse item, which includes shouting/scolding/insulting/threatening/talked rudely. On the one hand, this can capture the full "spectrum" of verbal abuse (and different terms people use to describe it), on the other it becomes more difficult to separate different forms of verbal abuse, or assess whether one particular item or behaviour is driving this.

I note that physical abuse, allowed to eat/drink, differential treatment have similar "composite" style questions.

TABLES

Table 2, supportive care item 23 - "support your anxieties and fears" - this item seems a little vague in its wording.

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