Reviewer’s report

Title: A grounded theory of regaining normalcy and reintegration of women with obstetric fistula in Kenya.

Version: 0 Date: 01 Jun 2018

Reviewer: Jean-Paul Dossou

Reviewer's report:

Abstract
Page 2/Line 18: The objective paragraph presents three different points:
- explore experiences of women immersing back into communities…
- contribute to theory in the substantive area of fistula care
- answer the question: what strategies improve obstetric fistula patients' social reintegration

In the current state of the abstract, it is a bite confusing. For consistency and clarity, the objective of the doctoral research "contribute to theory in the substantive area of fistula care" can be removed.

Page2/Line 25: You may not need to mention that this is a doctoral research.

Page3/Line 15: Conclusion: Which kind of implications for current practice? Can you be a bite more specific?

Introduction
This chapter will gain in clarity if the authors structure it better, by grouping all the sentences where they formulate the objectives of the paper.

Page 7/Line 9: You can keep "60" only and remove "sixty"
Page 9/Line 20: Authors mentioned that "conducting narratives at six and 12 months post discharge allowed for repeated measurement and comparison". Can they provide further explanation of what was measured? Or maybe is "measurement" the most appropriate concept to use here?

Page 8/Ethics
You may move the Ethics paragraph to the end of the Methods section

Page9/Line 33: Write on "its own biases" rather than "on their own biases"?
Page 9/Line 35 to 46: Those two assumptions are interesting but should be better and accurately reported. You should also better describe how they were formulated. For the second one especially: how did you conducted the exploratory study? Is it a separate study? or is the data collected from those eight women an integral part of the current study?
Page 9/Line 10 to 15: You may move these phrases related to the data analysis into the Data Analysis and theory development paragraphs on page 10.

Page 9&10: You present several aspects that showed the power imbalance; You mentioned that some women were in position to negotiate their stance. Beyond the neutral dressing, do you use any other element to minimize the power imbalance?

Page 10/Line 38: Do you have any reference for this definition? Fistula itself may be favoured by a set of poor existing conditions - physical (for instance a foeto-pelvic disproportion) or socio-economic (for instance "extreme" poverty). Does normalcy means for you a recovery to those existing poor existing conditions or a recovery to a state that is better than the one set by the preexisting conditions? Does a recovery to normalcy protect against recurrences of fistula for instance?

Results
Page 11/Line 11 to 25: This is not part of the results. You have mentioned those points in the background and it is redundant to repeat it again here.

Page 11: Since the study is qualitative and the sampling fully purposive, is it appropriate to report the percentages? What do they mean?

What do "normalcy" means for participants of the study? How do they defined the ideal state expected after recovery? What are the consistent expectations? are their any kind of priority order in those expectations?

Page 12/Line 55: What does the participant ID reporting add to the content of the paper? I suggest you remove it.
Page 6: "Being continent" is included in the definition of the reintegration scenarios. Is it an enabling factor of reintegration or is it part of the reintegration scenario itself? The same concern apply to the other factors. Can you clarify? Further did you consider the enabling or disabling influence of factors like the education, economic status, preexisting health status of the woman, the supportive nature of the family, the age of the woman, the reproductive history etc. on the reintegration scenario?

Page 17/Line 22: Why did you exclude the "dependence for sustenance" from the definition of reintegration and develop a separate paragraph for it?

Overall comment: The whole text should be edited to remove repeated ideas, for clarity and concision.

**Level of interest**
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

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

Acceptable
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal