Author’s response to reviews

Title: Using the Theory of Planned Behavior to Explain Birth in Health Facility Intention among Expecting Couples in a Rural Setting Rukwa Tanzania: A Cross-sectional Survey

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Author’s response to reviews:

Responding to Reviewers’ Comments
Reviewer 1
Comment 1
The questionnaire: Authors do not introduce the questionnaire adequately. For instance, the number of items for each domain or scoring procedure is not explained. How the authors indicated negative or positive subgroups. The authors also need either supplement the questionnaire or at least give an example of items for each domain.
Response 1
The example of questionnaires used for each domain are included in the document line 213 to line 254
The domains were taken as continues score because of differences in the groups to be compared, positive subgroup being large and negative subgroup being small in all three domains.

Comment 2
Analysis: Since most participants were positive the number of respondents in negative subgroup is very small and this might introduce bias in results. This should be discussed. In addition, using predictor might not be a correct word. It is better to use association instead. In addition, one expects to see the positive group as reference and not the negative subgroup. This should be clarified. In fact, I recommend reanalysis to see the odds for not intention for birth in health facility.
Response 2
The use of predictors was avoided and association was used inserted
Domains were no longer categorized instead they were taken as a continuous variable
Authors agree with the observation and re analysis was done and no intention was taken as a reference group.

Comment 3
Based on the above recommendation the Methods, the Results and the Discussion should be revised.
Response 3
The methods, the results and discussion were revised following re-analysis
Reviewer 2
Comment
Please check to make sure the conclusions made in the Conclusion section are consistent with the results for female vs. male participants.
It would also be helpful to add footnotes to the tables with the logistic regression results that describe which variables and confounders were included in the regression models, so the tables are more stand-alone.
Response
The conclusion was edited
The footnotes to the tables are added and tables are cited in the text

Reviewer 3
My remark on a need for gender contextualization of part of discussion was attracted by the authors' own conclusion that "Birth in health facility intention among male partners was lower compared to their female spouses. The reason could be that male partners avoid financial implications associated with health facility childbirth"
I am not satisfied with the response given.
Saying that discussion failed to include gender perspective because the only difference which was included in this study is biological and nothing on gender perspective - is to miss a point of studying couples.
By studying birth preparedness intentions and involving couples, the search for answers to the research question should consider male and female spouses as social beings that influence each other and not merely as biological creatures.
In the methods section this very paper says: "The questionnaire explored three main domains of birth preparedness intentions. These three domains included; 1) attitudes towards birth preparedness, 2) perceived subjective norms towards birth preparedness and 3) perceived behavior control towards birth preparedness". The three domains are themselves gendered. That is, the perspectives that women and men take in relation to the domains are influenced by gender norms.
Suggestion:
I expected to authors to expand explanation of why birth in health facility intention among male partners was lower compared to their female spouses by adding 1 - 2 sentences beyond what they had put. For instance, [see my addition to the earlier reason]:
The reason could be that male partners avoid financial implications associated with health facility childbirth. Avoidance of financial responsibility may be attributed to gender norms which influence men not to prioritize access to skilled birth attendance as pregnancy and childbirth are perceived to be women's affairs.
Response
Authors agree with the observation and the explanation is added see line 356 to line 359