Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 1  Date: 10 Oct 2019

Reviewer: T Nyamhanga

Reviewer's report:

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.
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