FACTORS INFLUENCING MALE INVOLVEMENT IN FAMILY PLANNING IN NTCHISI DISTRICT, MALAWI

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Content

- Short overview
- Methodology
- Results: 5 themes
- Discussion: reflection on bias
- Practical recommendations (where do we go from here?)
Short overview of topic

- Malawian Health sector: focus on male involvement in SRHR
- Large differences between female/male involvement in FP
  - Attempts not as successful as aimed for... WHY?

- Ntchisi district deserves attention
  - Both MMR and FR higher than of Malawi as a whole

- Understand where lack of male involvement derives from ➔ recommendations for improvement
Research question:

“WHICH FACTORS INFLUENCE MALE INVOLVEMENT IN FAMILY PLANNING IN NTCHISI DISTRICT, MALAWI?”
Methodology

- Study population: sexually active men
- Women and Health Surveillance Assistants
  - Social motivation
- Conceptual framework: combination of framework for SRHR and the IMB-model
Results: 5 major themes

- Health behaviour information
- Health behavioural skills
- Health behaviour motivation
- Gender relations
- Socio-economic factors

Health behaviour
Personal attitude
- Acknowledge benefits
- Means to an end
- Shy/ashamed regarding going to clinic

Social influence
- Older men discuss FP with environment, younger men do not
- Not in school curriculum
- ‘Learn through mistakes’
Gender relations

- Head of the household: decision-maker
- However: distances himself from responsibilities
  - Woman’s responsibility...
  - To avoid pregnancy
  - To obtain FP methods
  - To take care of children

- Contradictive signs...
Health behavioural skills

- 9/14 respondents never accompanied partner to clinic
  - “Partner controls me”
  - Busy with the land
  - Resourcing money
  - Rather drink beer than wait around

- Women want male accompaniment
  - First in line
  - Improved information retention
Discussion: reflection on bias

- Social desirability bias
  - *Researcher: foreigner, different gender, different age category*

- Unrelated conversations regarding the study
- Topics too sensitive
- Evaluation of their district rather than objective research
- Quoting radio commercials

- Influenced data on ‘positive attitude’

- Please researcher (female)
- Know what is ‘expected’
Discussion: reflection on bias

- Attempts to minimize bias
  - Sitting next to respondents (not directly facing them)
  - Being more direct
  - Gaining trust of village headman prior to interviewing
Discussion: reflection on bias

- **Language barrier**
  - *Use of a translator (male)*

- Use simplified versions of question
- Trigger simplified answers
- Impossibility to directly probe

- **Attempts to minimize bias**
  - *Translator: HSA for 17 years*
  - *Excellent knowledge of both English and Chichewa language*
  - *Pilot interviews*
  - *Back translation*
Practical recommendations

■ FP awareness meetings
  - Village headmen: facilitating, motivating
  - HSAs: educate, motivate
  - Amref: motivate HSAs and village headmen, provide guidance, organise

■ Train HSAs
  - Passive → active
Practical recommendations

■ Man-friendly ways regarding information provision
  - Focus groups → how can we best involve men in FP?
  - Include: village headmen, HSAs, co-workers Amref (?), male respondents

■ FP-related education in school curriculum