

Peer Review Report

Review Report on Unmet Need for Family Planning and Spousal Separation in Nepal: A Spatial and Multilevel Analysis

Original Article, Int J Public Health

Reviewer: Kiran Bam

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EVALUATION

Q 1 Please summarize the main findings of the study.

While a substantial body of knowledge exists regarding the unmet needs of family planning among married women and its association with spousal separation in Nepal, the authors have emphasised the necessity for family planning programs targeted at women separated from their husbands or partners through spatial and multilevel analysis.

Q 2 Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

The authors have utilised data from the 2016 NDHS report, which boasts representativeness and adheres to a robust methodology. However, it's important to note that the landscape could have potentially evolved with the release of the 2021 NDHS data, introducing possible changes to the scenario.

Q 3 Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

I recommend that the authors provide specific details about the gaps they are addressing in the Introduction section, focusing solely on the research objectives to highlight the significance of their study. Additionally, I suggest that the authors highlight government efforts and areas identified by the National Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan to enhance the depth of their discussion.

Considering that the 2021 NDHS data is now available, it could be valuable to incorporate data from earlier surveys to analyse spatial variations over time. This would provide insights into any changes that might have occurred since the 2021 NDHS survey. It would be possible to analyse the 2021 data and present visualisations depicting temporal variations in both spousal separation and the unmet need for family planning, using earlier NDHS reports for context.

Regarding the manuscript:

Line 26: Should "The DHS Program" be referenced? If so, which year or report is being referred to?

Line 30: Clarify whether "Age 15–49" refers to years or months. Ensure uniform clarity across the entire manuscript.

Line 35: Consider introducing the socioecological model before discussing the factors.

Lines 40–43: The details and scenario of COVID-19 might not be necessary, given that the authors are using NDHS 2016 data.

Table 1: Avoid indicating percentages (%) in each field, as these percentages are already represented as weighted percentages. Also, ensure that the percentages add up correctly in each column (e.g., age, please check).

Table 2: Specify significance levels as " <0.05 ," " ≤ 0.01 ," or " ≤ 0.001 " for all models in the footnotes. Expand "ICC" and "AIC" in the footnote.

Figure 1: Ensure that the map of Nepal accurately reflects the territories of Kalapani, Limpiyadhura, and Lipulekh as Nepali territories. Verify the spelling of "Kosi" as "Koshi."

Lines 256–258: Confirm the accuracy of the statement "With increased cross-border movements, it is estimated that Madhesh and Sudurpashchim have a higher number of migrants living with HIV (Bhattarai et al., 2021)." Ensure that this finding is correctly attributed to the appropriate reference.

Avoid using "UMN" terminology for clarity since this is not a widely used acronym; use the full form consistently throughout the document.

For consistency, choose either "spouses" or "wives." If uncertain about mentioning "husbands" or "partners," refer to the data collection tool's definitions for clarification.

PLEASE COMMENT

Q 4 Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

Suggested revision: Unmet Need for Family Planning and Spousal Separation in Nepal: A Spatial and Multilevel Analysis

Q 5 Are the keywords appropriate?

Keywords such as unmet need can be added. Keywords should be in alphabetical order.

Q 6 Is the English language of sufficient quality?

It's sufficient quality. Recommended for review by a native English speaker to improve readability.

Q 7 Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

Q 8 Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?

Suggested to refer to government reports and plan as applicable.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 9 Originality



Q 10 Rigor



Q 11 Significance to the field



Q 12 Interest to a general audience



Q 13 Quality of the writing



Q 14 Overall scientific quality of the study



REVISION LEVEL

Q 15 Please make a recommendation based on your comments:

Major revisions.