

Women's choice to include male partners in family planning counseling: The roles of intimate partner violence, reproductive coercion, and covert family planning use

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INTRODUCTION

- Engaging men in family planning (FP) counseling is a prominent global strategy to support voluntary use of FP
- Few studies consider women's and girls' preferences to involve their partner or how experiences of intimate partner violence (IPV) and reproductive coercion (RC) influence those preferences
- Objective: To understand how women's choice to involve their male partner in FP counseling relates to previous experiences of physical and sexual IPV, RC, and covert FP use

METHODS

- Data from two trials testing an intervention providing education on RC and IPV and offering male partner FP counseling
 - Kenya: n=659 FP clients aged 15-49
 - Bangladesh: n=2686 abortion clients aged 18-49
- Secondary analysis of baseline data
- Logistic mixed effects models to test cross-sectional associations between key independent variables (RC and IPV experience and covert FP use) and desire to involve the male partner in FP counseling, accounting for clinic level clustering

CONCLUSION

Violence is a common experience for women and girls seeking FP and abortion services

Desire for male engagement is lower among women and girls who have experienced partner violence

- With comprehensive counselling, clients who have experienced RC, IPV, and those who have recently used FP covertly are less likely to desire male engagement in FP counseling

Women and girls should be counseled and empowered to decide about male engagement

- Blanket approach encouraging male involvement may not be desirable or safe for many women and girls
- Women and girls must be the ultimate decision-makers

RESULTS

Desire to engage male partner in FP counselling

- Kenya: 43%
- Bangladesh: 49%

Prevalence of key independent variables

- Kenya FP clients
 - RC: 45%
 - Physical IPV: 58%
 - Sexual IPV: 32%
 - Covert FP use (last 3 months): 13%
- Bangladesh abortion clients
 - RC: 10%
 - Physical IPV: 43%
 - Sexual IPV: 12%
 - Covert FP use (last 3 months): 8%

Figure 1. Association between Key Independent Variables and Desire to Involve Male Partner in FP Counseling (AORs)

