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## **PROTOCOL: A Rapid Review of Theoretical Frameworks Used In Family Planning Interventions Involving Men and Boys**

Robinson, M., Aventin, A., Hanratty, J., Ruane-McAteer, E., Tomlinson, M., Clarke, M., Okonofua, F., & Lohan, M. (2020, Aug 3). PROTOCOL: A Rapid Review of Theoretical Frameworks Used In Family Planning Interventions Involving Men and Boys. Unpublished.

### **Document Version:**

Early version, also known as pre-print

### **Queen's University Belfast - Research Portal:**

[Link to publication record in Queen's University Belfast Research Portal](#)

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***Title:***

A Rapid Review of Theoretical Frameworks Used In Family Planning Interventions Involving Men and Boys

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***Funding Statement:***

This work is funded by the UKAID and the Centre of Excellence for Development Impact and Learning [Grant: S.238].

## **Background:**

Family Planning (FP) interventions provide information and skills to equip individuals achieve their desired family size and effectively plan the timing of births and is essential to the promotion of health and rights for women and families (WHO, 2018). This also has the additional effect of promoting individual and family health and rights. Ensuring effective FP and uptake of FP interventions is a serious public health concern, not least of all in low- and middle-income countries where promotion of FP, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) is argued to be central to social and economic development (Rodríguez, Say, & Temmerman, 2014). Further to this, men are typically underserved and under-involved in FP programming even though there is increasing recognition of the fact that men and boys can play a key role in ensuring uptake of FP and enabling maternal SRHR (Hardee, Croce-Galis, & Gay, 2017; Phiri, King, & Newell, 2015).

Despite the importance of effective and evidence-based FP intervention, the theoretical grounding and processes of complex interventions relating to FP remain poorly understood. There is a lack of cohesive literature on the commonly applied frameworks in this area, particularly those involving men and boys. A previously conducted review of theory-based interventions found that Social Cognitive Theory was the most frequently employed in interventions to promote contraceptive use, often in conjunction with another model of behaviour change (Lopez, Tolley, Grimes, & Chen-Mok, 2009). The current review however asks a more specific research question; about the theoretical basis for interventions conducted with men and boys. Lopez et al. (2009) did not parse the design and effects of interventions between genders or sexes.

Equally ill-defined is the methodology of *Rapid Review*. Typically, this method employs a *systematic* but *restricted* approach to the capture and analysis of literature (Plüddemann, Aronson, Onakpoya, Heneghan, & Mahtani, 2018). Most commonly *Rapid* or *Restricted Reviews* are limited in their methods and scope to aid more timely synthesis, for instance limiting search to (peer-reviewed) published literature or certain databases, narrowly specified dates, and narrative analysis and summary of data (Tricco et al., 2015).

Some initial evidence suggests that the results of *Rapid* or *Restricted Reviews* largely coincide with those of full *Systematic Reviews* of the same topic while offering more timely completion (Plüddemann et al., 2018). Plüddemann and colleagues (2018) however note that while this approach comes with the disadvantage of more caveated interpretations of results, it may be effectively used to guide decisions in relation to subsequent full *Systematic Review*.

Further to this, systematic evidence reviews typically focus on examining the outcome effectiveness of interventions (Pawson, Greenhalgh, Harvey, & Walshe, 2005). A contrasting approach to this is that of a *Realist Review*. This approach attempts to synthesise the theoretical and empirical to understand “what works for whom, in what circumstances, in what respects and how” (Pawson et al., 2005, p. 1). As the goal of this review is to identify the use of theories of change and models thereof this approach to evidence synthesis is more appropriate to framework for current analyses and synthesis.

This study therefore implements a *Rapid Realist Review* of literature concerning complex interventions for FP involving men and boys. This review has a specific and restricted research objective; to identify what theoretical frameworks underpin interventions in these contexts with a view to better informing a forthcoming broader *Systematic Review* of these interventions. The goal of this review and synthesis is to construct an informed *Logic Model* is useful to guide the creation of a more substantive *Theory of Change* with available information from the review regarding the direction, magnitude, and action of effects (Kneale, Thomas, & Harris, 2015).

## ***Inclusion Criteria***

### *Intervention Type(s):*

Psycho-social or behavioural interventions that aim to increase capacity or engagement with family planning. This is inclusive of interventions where family planning outcomes (e.g. birth spacing, contraception explicitly for family planning, unintended pregnancy) are not primary outcomes under investigation. Records that warrant inclusion might be quantitative or qualitative primary research, reviews, or protocol papers that detail the application of theory in FP intervention programming.

### *Target Setting:*

Programmes including males of any age and any sexual orientation. Interventions and trials conducted in any context warrant inclusion, however those conducted or design in the context of Low- and Middle-Income Countries will be prioritised in analyses.

### *Intervention Design:*

Literature must make explicit reference to a recognised theory of behaviour change either in name or in sufficient detail to allow for confident interpretation. This should include unambiguous statement of an intended process or mechanism from intervention design or components to study outcomes. This will be represented graphically using a *Logic Model*, *Influence Diagram*, or described in substantive detail in tables and text.

### *Intervention Outcomes:*

Included interventions will aim to influence knowledge, attitude, and behaviour change in domain(s) of family planning. These may include: family planning attitudes and knowledge, access to family planning materials and education, use of (modern) contraception, birth spacing, paternal antenatal engagement, unintended pregnancy, preparedness for child birth/rearing, psycho-social interventions for (in)fertility.

## **Search**

### *Strategy:*

This *Restricted Review* will scope the FP interventions featured in a recently published Evidence Gap Map of SRHR research with men and boys comprising evidence from January 2007 to July 2018 (Ruane-McAteer et al., 2019). This review will supplement this examining potentially relevant FP interventions conducted outside the scope of this previous review with an additional restricted search of published and unpublished literature produced between January 2007 and April 2020. This is to facilitate identifying modern trends in the application of evidence-based and theory driven frameworks in FP programming. This review will focus primarily on peer-reviewed published literature. These items will be identified through searches of the following databases: PubMed, CINAHL, PsychINFO, and Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL). Potentially relevant grey literature will also be identified through recommendation from expert practitioners and academics from the study advisory group, and by using abridged search terms and strategy of that described above using Google and Google Scholar search. The first five pages of records returned (as sorted by relevance) will be screened in these grey literature searches.

Screening of literature will be carried out by one member of the research team by title only to remove obviously irrelevant records, with a random sample comprising 10% of excluded records check by a second reviewer for quality control. The first 100 titles and abstracts will be independently double screening by two reviewers against inclusion criteria. Any disagreement between reviewers will be resolved through discussion and repeated until the research team is satisfied one author may proceed to single screening of remaining records. A random sample of 10% of included articles will be checked by a second reviewer to maintain screening quality.

Full texts will be dual screened by two reviewers independently and data extraction conducted on the first 5 articles. Disagreements will once again be resolved through discussion until satisfied that one reviewer may complete the remaining data extraction alone. Similarly, a random sample (10%) of final included records will be subject to an additional quality check by an independent reviewer.

*Search Terms:*

The search terms used were informed by the primary goal of this review; to identify the underpinning theoretical framework of FP interventions with men and boys. These will be reviewed by three members of the research team for face validity. Agreed terms were then piloted with a cursory search of the target databases to ensure appropriateness prior to implementation.

Terms used for *Family Planning* and *Males* criteria were informed by those used by the previous systematic review of SRHR undertaken by members of the research team from which initial evidence was obtained (Ruane-McAteer et al., 2018). The terms used for the *Framework* criteria were adapted from those recommended by Booth and Carroll (2015) and Rehfuess et al. (2018).

1. Family Planning	2. Males	3. Intervention Type	4. Intervention Design	5. Framework
“Family planning” or “contraception” or “birth spacing” or “child spacing” or “unplanned pregnancy” or “unintended pregnancy” or “unwanted pregnancy” or “abortion” or “*fertility”	“Men” or “man” or “male” or “males” or “boy” or “boys” or “masculin*” or “father*” or “husband” or “partner”	“Intervention*” or “program*” or “trial*” or “random*”	“behav*” or “educat*” or “psycho*” or “social”	“framework*” or “model*” or “theor*” adj2 (change or behav*)” or “concept*” or “diagram*” or “figure*” or “construct” or “principle*”

Searches will be limited to article *Title*, *Abstract*, and *Keywords* as appropriate across databases. The search strategy will specify “1 AND 2 AND 3 AND 4 AND 5”, limiting results to 2007 to present.

*Information Screening and Collation:*

Potentially relevant articles will be screened using titles and abstracts, removing clearly irrelevant items. The remaining potentially relevant articles will be organised using Microsoft Excel software and reviewed with regards to inclusion criteria applied to title, abstract, and full text by a member of the research team. In cases where the decision to include an item is uncertain an independent reviewer will aid decision-making.

The flow of review data screening and inclusion will be reported in accordance with PRISMA guidelines.

*Data Extraction:*

One member of the research team will be responsible for data extraction from studies meeting inclusion criteria. The information to be extracted from studies includes; study and participant characteristics, intervention characteristics (i.e. intended outcome and mode of delivery), and the theoretical underpinning(s) or framework(s) used in this intervention.

*Data Synthesis:*

As this review aims to collated and synthesise the characteristics and components of interventions, rather than their effectiveness or outcomes, the risk of bias and wider study design will not be appraised.

The available information and results related to intervention theoretical frameworks will be analysed and presented using *Narrative Synthesis*. This is deemed the most appropriate method of analysis as this review attempts to collate and synthesise the current practices with regards to theoretical framework application in FP programming. As such the anticipated output and results are an overview of the approaches used by interventions in this area, and a surmised general framework to be used to assess intervention components in a broader forthcoming review.



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