Reviewer's report

Title: Household smoking and dental caries in schoolchildren: the Ryukyus Child Health Study

Version: 2 Date: 21 April 2010

Reviewer: Olalekan A Ayo-Yusuf

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revision

The author(s) have addressed most of the concerns raised in the previous manuscript, but it was rather remarkable that the authors claim that their estimates did not change after adjusting for errors from cluster sampling.

It was also noted that the additional paragraph under results in the revised manuscript (page 7, lines 10-11) suggest a total over 100% (i.e. 42% + 49.2% + 9.1% = 100.3%). The authors should rectify this arithmetical error.

The sentence ‘this could have driven the results’ (see page 12, line 2) is not clear, as it reads as an incomplete sentence. I assume the authors meant that the differences in respondents (parents vs, child) may have influenced their results. If so, it should be stated clearly in what direction this could have influenced their results.

Page 10 lines 2-9: Although the authors contend that not controlling for potential confounders may explain why some studies did not find an association between SHSe/active smoking and caries, one could argue that such situation may be more likely to support finding a spurious association between SHSe/active smoking and caries. Could the authors clarify.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests