Reviewer's report

Title: Patterns and socioeconomic influences of tobacco exposure in tobacco cultivating rural areas of Yunnan Province, China

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Reviewer: Yueh-Hsiu Mathilda Chiu

Reviewer's report:

This study assessed the association of socioeconomic status (SES) with smoking prevalence, nicotine dependence, and secondhand smoke (SHS) exposure in a Chinese tobacco cultivating region. Overall, this is a straightforward paper with findings that may add on to the literature. Nevertheless, there are some concerns as follows.

*** Major Comments ***

- In Introduction or Study region section, please provide the information on smoking legislation/policy in Yunnan province.

- [Methods, Study region] The authors reported that tobacco is cultivated in 45 counties in Yunnan -- please provide information on how many counties in total are in Yunnan province.

- Only one county each for economically advantaged and economically disadvantaged groups from Yunnan province was selected, is this county representative of each group? Please provide more information on this. Also, what is the wealth distribution of economically advantaged and disadvantaged group? Is this determined arbitrarily?

- Since the data were from two different counties with different economic environment, I suggest that the authors also adjust for this factor in the multivariable logistic regression.

- According to the questionnaire, it seems that the authors also asked about the intensity of smoking (average amount of cigarettes smoked every day). I’d suggest the authors also do an analysis examining the association between SES factors and amount of smoking, as this would provide some sort of quantitative information and strengthen the study.

- Nicotine dependence was categorized by FTND scores. Were the cutpoints that the authors used determined arbitrarily/a priori? Or was this suggested by previous studies? I’ve seen slightly different cutpoints used in other studies. Please provide more information and citations.

- The numbers and percentages in [Table 2] are somehow confusing. Take first column (current smoking) for example, the number of current smoking men was 2780, but what does 68.3% mean (what is the denominator?)? Likewise, for “All"
current smokers, the number was 2817, but what does 32.5% mean? All the percentages listed in this table are confusing. In addition, some numbers do not add up correctly (for example, “nicotine dependence” block, 2366 men and 27 women are 2393 in total, not 2395). Please fix the table or include a footnote/description about how the percentages were calculated, and also please double-check the numbers.

*** Minor Comments ***

- For SHS exposure analysis, it seems that the authors only restricted to non-smokers. I’d like to note that the smokers can also be exposed to SHS, and the health effects of SHS and direct smoking might be different so it is also interesting to look at SHS in smokers.

- [Table 3 & Table 4]: Please provide total n for each of the 3 columns.

- [Methods, 2nd paragraph]: Please spell out the full terms of GDP

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.