Reviewer's report

Title: Household headship and child-death experience by mothers: Evidence from Nepal

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Reviewer: Sarah Saleem

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Comments By Dr Sarah Saleem

Household headship and child-death experience by mothers: Evidence from Nepal

By Ramesh Adhikari

The study is the secondary analysis of Nepal's Demographic and Health Survey data of 2006. The analysis is performed on 4,066 women who gave birth five years prior to this survey. Author was interested in looking at the relationship of household headship and child mortality. Chi-square test was used to determine associations between child-death experience and the explanatory variables. Binary logistic regression was used to control for other variables. The results suggested that women who have given birth to three or more children, who live in mountain region, who are illiterate, who believe Hindu religion and who did not utilize antenatal care for the last pregnancy were more likely to experience child death. Furthermore, women from female headed household were 30 percent less likely to have experienced a child-death (Odd Ratio = 0.70) as compared to women from male headed household.

The study is conducted on a nationally representative sample. The question posed by the author is interesting, however results presentation needs some clarity. The language especially in the abstract and introduction section has to be tightened up with grammar checks. My specific comments are as follows and need major revisions for publication:

Abstract:

Minor revisions required

Background: “Nepal has been substantial improvements in its reproductive health outcomes; still infant and child mortality are high.” Please change ‘been’ to ‘seen’ or change as appropriate.

Methods: line 3 from above change N=---- to n =

Results: needs language correction especially in last 7 lines.

Conclusion: needs language correction

Background: Last para lines starting from “In addition, this paper also aims to fulfill the knowledge gap in the literature -------- as well as reduce the risk of maternal and infant morbidity and mortality- Is too long and confusing. This
needs rephrasing.

Data and methods:
Third para ‘the units of analysis’ should be written as ‘unit of analysis’. It is suggested that the lines starting from ‘though women who have ever given birth --till end of para can be removed.

Results:
Major revisions required
The dependent variable has to be clear and should be consistent in all the tables. It is suggested that Table 1 should be removed as it is not consistent with rest of the tables. Any information which author is interested regarding this can be included in the text.
Table 2 last column should be removed and total “n” can be included in the title. Same comment is for Table 3
For logistic regression I do not see any need of having two models done separately. Variable ‘household headship’ can be included with other variables. Two separate tables can show unadjusted ORs and other adjusted ORs. Alternatively same table can have both unadjusted and adjusted ORs

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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' below