Reviewer’s report

Title: Pregnancy and early motherhood among adolescents in five East African countries: a multi-level analysis of risk and protective factors

Version: 0 Date: 15 Jul 2018

Reviewer: Eri Shishido

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this research paper.

My major comments are as follows.

1) Despite DHS data has been updated every five years, why you opened more than 20 years from 1989 to 2016.
2) I think it is clear from existing research that over 50% of adolescent women are unintended pregnancies, but have any new findings in this study?
3) The conclusion requires work to better summarize the paper and highlight the importance of its findings. I think that consistency will be lost.
4) Descriptions about multi sectoral approaches and decision making suddenly came out of discussion. Please give a description based on the results.

Here are the minor comments.

1) There is no description of research design.
2) Please explain why you chose these five countries.
3) P6. Line51, In table 1, it is Malawi 2015, but the text is Malawi 2016, please check.
4) Table1. Please adjust the format and the decimal point, and add the standard deviation to the mean value.
5) P10. Line48. 「Moreover, the proportion of adolescent girls with secondary and above education doubled in Kenya and Zambia and almost tripled in Uganda, Tanzania and Malawi between 1990 and 2016. In addition, higher proportion of adolescents resided in urban areas during the later DHSs (Table 1).」
   →Secondary education in Tanzania is 6.4% → 35.1%, Malawi 4.5% → 27.2%.
   I think that it is three times or more.
   Please check the fiscal year: 1990→1989.
6) P11. Line25. 「A higher proportion of the adolescent pregnancies and births occurred among women in-union, ranging from 67% in Malawi and Uganda to 54% in Zambia (result not shown).」 →Please describe the year of this data.
7) Figure 1 is hard to understand which country the chart shows.
8) P13. Line17. 「In Zambia and Kenya, significant variation was observed in adolescent pregnancy and motherhood with the sex of the household head (Table 2).」
   →Mistakes between Uganda and Kenya?
9) P15. discussion. If you compare it in the events of 1990 and 2017, do not you need other results in figure1? Compared with 1990, pregnant women by age 19 are decreasing, but I thought why Tanzania and Malawi had an upward trend with the latest data.

10) Table1. Please describe FP. What is the indicator of Knowledge of FP?

11) Table3. Please check if the fiscal year is accurate. Is it difficult to describe not only% but the number of subjects?

12) Table4. Please adjust the format.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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