Reviewer’s report

Title: Youth Working in Tobacco Farming: Effects on Smoking Behavior and Association with Health Status

Version: 0 Date: 12 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Aleksandra Herbec

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript prepared by Dr Alderete and colleagues, which reports findings from a longitudinal study of adolescents in Argentina, among whom over 22% work at tobacco plantations.

The study has many strengths, including a large sample size and the longitudinal design. It is also written clearly. Moreover, addresses a still under-researched and important area of occupational hazards due to tobacco farming among youth.

Given the literature review presented by the authors in the introduction, the findings from the study are not particularly surprising. Nevertheless, it is important to report this data, and I believe this study would be of interest to many readers.

I have some questions to the authors and suggestions for the manuscript.

1. The title should probably be rephrased. First of all, this was a correlational study, and the analysis could not control for other factors that could bring about the observed outcomes - instead of effects it should read 'associations' or similar. At the same time, it would also be helpful to add to the title that this was a longitudinal study (possibly clarifying that the follow-up has taken place after a years' time).

2. A potential limitation is that the findings may not be due to the youth engaging in tobacco growing, but being in employment in general, which would be in line with the findings that the authors cite in the introduction.

3. Under sampling, p.6, there is no reason provided to using only the data from 2005 and 2006? Why have not the author used a longer period of observation, i.e. 2004-2007? Was the data (or similar outcomes) analysed and published before for the longer period?

4. It would be most useful if the authors stated at the end of the introduction what are the different research questions (and which of these were determined a priori and which were exploratory), and to structure the results according to these research questions.

5. In relation to point 3, it is not clear why the authors conducted comparisons between girls and boys? This analysis has not been set up in the introduction.
6. What is the role of religion in tobacco farming (and the importance or measuring it?)

7. Data and information in Table 3 are not very clear, e.g. 'fair-bad/excellent-good' - it's difficult to interpret the data and understand this headings (e.g. what is the reference group for the logistic regressions?). I suggest the authors try to present this data differently. Perhaps it would be useful to have longer annotations and table titles to clarify how to read the information.

Other issues and suggestions

8. In the abstract, results, it's not clear what the 'initiation into' happened at the age of 12.6 yrs old (tobacco farming?).

9. In the abstract, it is unclear what the results refer to in terms of the comparisons - presumably the percentages compare the rates of outcomes of interest among the youth that is involved vs not in tobacco farming?

10. There is no need to add the (MLR) abbreviation in the abstract as it is not used elsewhere.

11. The p-value in line 4/5 on, p5 is probably not needed.

12. What is meant by 'passive content' on top of p.7?

13. The sentence 'we used smoking information from T1 and T2' could be better phrased, and possibly moved to the start of the paragraph. There also needs to be some clarification as to what 'smoking information' refers to?

14. Similarly, it would be better to start the paragraph on 'working in tobacco farming' with: "At T1 data were collected on working in tobacco farming. The youth were asked if they had ever worked in any…..".

15. The first paragraph of the discussion is quite long and includes references to new findings (e.g. ethnographic observations), which is quite unexpected. It would be better to split this first paragraph into a summary of the findings.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?  
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

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?  
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Yes

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