Reviewer’s report

Title: WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT, PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE AS RISK INDICATORS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARIES

Version: 0 Date: 14 Jan 2020

Reviewer: Faisal Hakeem

Reviewer's report:

Overall, this is a well-written paper reporting an interesting ecological topic, the association between women empowerment and early childhood caries (ECC). This study was an interesting read and presents results of a topic that has not been searched using global level data.

Title and abstract:

The title of the study is long but summarises the study purpose and women empowerment indicators being used. The aim of the study, methods and statistical approach were clearly outlined in the abstract.

Introduction:

Authors have clearly outlined what is already known about the topic and gave plausible explanations of how ECC and maternal wellbeing are associated. They have outlined the research question and justified it really well.

Methods:

Overall, the methods are easy to read and describe complex and detailed variables very well. Including the contextual framework figure in the manuscript assists readers in understanding the relationship between women empowerment indicators and ECC. While the authors have described women empowerment indicators in details, they have only referred to El Tantawi et al study for the outcome variable. I suggest adding some brief information on how the prevalence of ECC was obtained. Finally, analytical methods are clear and well described.

Results:

The results are presented in an appropriate way. It is clear to see what aspects of women empowerment were not statistically significant.

Discussion:

The discussion begins with discussing the principle findings of the study. Women empowerment indicators that were found to be associated with ECC were discussed from different angles and supported by other literature.
In light of the limitations to the study, the authors were able to recommend potential directions and inform future studies. The discussion overall is well written and has a precise conclusion that answers the aim of the study.

My only comment that would strengthen this manuscript is adding some brief information on how the prevalence of ECC was obtained.

**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.

Yes

**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:

Acceptable
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