Author’s response to reviews

Title: Adolescents' reproductive health knowledge, choices and factors affecting reproductive health choices: a qualitative study in the West Gonja District in Northern Region, Ghana

Authors:

Joseph Kyilleh (jmkyilleh@gmail.com)
Philip Tabong (philgh2001@yahoo.com)
Benson Konlaan (bkonlaan@uds.edu.gh)

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Author’s response to reviews:

We wish to thank the reviewer for his comments. The comments are relevant and have contributed in strengthening our manuscripts. Below are point-by-point response to the comments.

* The study explored adolescents' knowledge about the reproductive health, choices, the type of choices they make and factors that affect these choices in a community in northern Ghana, applying a qualitative study. Focus group discussion with adolescents and individual interviews with stakeholders related to sexual reproductive health services were conducted. A weakness of the paper is that no clear conceptual framework has been applied for the study.

  * Response: Thanks for the comment. We actually used ecological model or framework in the study but did not highlight that in our initial submission. This has therefore been added in this revised manuscript.

* The description of the study design can be improved substantially. The two research methods that were used are not mentioned in the description of the design (focus groups discussions with adolescents and individual interviews with stakeholder).

  * Response: We have added the two methods of data collection strategies that were used in this study. We have provided details of the data collection under the section on data collection and do not wish to repeat details of that under the study design.
* In several places in the results section the authors report findings in term of numbers. However, this was a qualitative study that didn't use a representative sample, so does not allows the use of numbers or percentages.

* Response: We have revised the entire results and removed all quantitative (percentage) details.

* The discussion of the results is rather superficial. For example, one of the findings reported is that the attitude of health care workers providing services to adolescents was negative. It is not clear to what extent this conclusion is based on the data from the adolescents or from the health care workers themselves. The paper provides very little information on the perceptions and attitudes of the stakeholders.

* Response: We have added section on results section on perception of stakeholder (highlighted on page 22). We have also clarified this in our discussion

* No limitations of the study are discussed.

* Response: We have added a section on limitation of the study (highlighted on page 28)

* The paper has lots of grammar mistakes and needs an extensive review, preferably by a native English speaker.

* Response: Extensive language editing has been done as suggested.

Specific comments

* Page 4, line 12-14: Not clear what these statistics mean. Do you mean 11% of those 14% who begun child bearing? 3% of those who started child bearing? (Or 3% of the total population of females aged 15-19?)

* Response: This has been clarified and highlighted on page 4 lines 18-19 of this revised
* Page 9, line 6-9: You are using numbers as if you conducted a quantitative study. Your research is not based on a representative sample, so in this way numbers have no meaning and should not be used. Your focus needs to be on qualitative information.

* Response: This revision has been done accordingly

* Page 13, line 4: The meaning of this quote is not very clear. Who takes care of the girl? Who has invested in vain?

* Response: This has been clarified, highlighted on page 13-14 of this revised manuscript

* Page 15, line 16: I don't understand what this quote is saying.

* Response: This has been clarified and highlighted on page 14

* Page 15, line 18-20: How did your study measure that unplanned pregnancies were common among adolescents? This is not a quantitative study.

* Response: We have clarified this. It was based on participants’ perception and health workers knowledge about the reproductive health situation in the study district.

* Page 17, line 12-13: Your participants may perceive that the incidence of STIs is high. Your data don't show this. This is a qualitative study that is unable to show the extent of a problem (amounts or numbers).

* Response: This has been revised.

* Page 24, line 6-8: Which study you are referring to?? Based on the design of your study, it is unable to show the extent or incidence of unplanned pregnancies.

* Response: we have revised this accordingly.

Finally, we have also noted and effected changes that were highlighted on the pdf file. These have been highlighted in this revised manuscript.