Reviewer’s report

Title: The trend of caesarean birth rate changes in China after ‘universal two-child policy’ era: A population-based study in 2013-2018

Version: 0 Date: 04 Mar 2020

Reviewer: Yanhong Gong

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper. The document aimed to study the caesarean delivery rate affected by the universal two-child policy using a large amount of data from NFPCP. However, it provided inadequate analyses and some descriptions of this paper are imprecise and inappropriate. It should be carefully polished furthermore.

Here are some queries which I will like the authors to address.

Abstract
1.Line 58, there is a lack of statistical analysis in the method section.

Background
1.Line 81, please provide the references for the risks of cesarean delivery.
2.Line 107, it is better to briefly describe what the "universal two-child policy" is.
3.Line 108, "affect the caesarean rate by influencing women's expectations and choices", it is necessary to specify what the "women's expectations and choices" are and how influence.

Methods
1.Line 147-151, this paragraph should be demonstrated in the Results Section.
2.Line 148, why choose the women who were aged 20-49 years old at delivery as the study participants?
3.Line 156 and 190-191, the statements of covariates and "reference levels of covariates" are confusing. In my opinion, for example, nationality should be one of the covariates and Han nationality should be reference level of this covariate.
4.Line 177, why used age structure from 1% national population sample survey in 2015 to standardize caesarean delivery rate?

Results
1.Line 214-215, "low-risk birth which is defined as......." there appears to be repetitions of descriptions for the "low-risk birth".
2.The values in table 1 and Table 2 were shown irregularly, some of the figures were presented with one decimal place, while some were presented with two. In addition, there was no footnote to explain the meaning of abbreviations as well as numbers inside and outside brackets.
3.Please provide the overall cesarean rate across all included regions.
4.I suggest authors to try to analyze the cesarean rate by nulliparous and multiparous women, respectively, which may provide more information. Because these two groups may have significant difference in delivery modes.
Discussion
1. Line 271-272, the study did not report an overall caesarean delivery rate at all, and there was no any reference for the previous publications. However, the authors have devoted a large chunk of "Discussion Section" (line271-282, and line300-308) to clarify the issue.
2. Line 284, I think this statement is improper, for there is no evidence for this statement based on the findings presented.
3. These sentences are hard to understand. "we could not ……universal two-child policy. Nevertheless……and low-risk women." (line 369-372), please clarify.

Conclusions
1. Line383-384, "China is seemed to …… in cesarean deliveries", there is no evidence for this statement based on the findings presented in the study, it should be removed.

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.

Unable to assess

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

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