Reviewer's report

Title: HIV status and treatment influence on fertility desires among women newly becoming eligible for antiretroviral therapy in western Kenya: insights from a qualitative study

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Reviewer: Arslan Mazhar

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Abstract: Abstract is well written. While the study aims to evaluate how access to early ART influences fertility desires among HIV-infected ART-naïve women; the results sections lacks inference and presents very generalized findings. E.g. one of the finding is that individual factors, such as age, parity, current health status, and number of surviving or HIV-infected children, played a crucial role in decisions about future fertility. It is imperative to highlight here whether these factors had positive or negative influence on fertility desires among HIV-infected ART-naïve women. This is mentioned in the 'Plain English Summary'- pointing out negative influences of HIV-positive status for having more children. This must be included in the results section of the abstract.

Background section is well documented. It talks about the rationale, purpose of the study and literature review on impact of HIV infection on fertility desires.

Methods section talks about participants, reasons for purposive sampling, sampling method, methods of data collection, information on discussion guide, and method for data analysis. All of them are sufficiently and scientifically written.

Results and Discussion. Findings of previous and current contraceptive use are important and must be documented in the narrative (in row no. 16). There should be more commentary in this section. Moreover, there is too much information in the table such as 'Religious Affiliation' which shall be deleted (primarily to avoid busy table). This may have significance to research question but is debatable from the ethical perspective.

Row no 25 & 26. 'Most women perceived the community …….for three major reasons'. This is a quiet key finding and missed out in the abstract. It is suggested to add this key finding in the abstract.

Row 27 & 28: Limited finances though identified by few, is another impeding factor for HIV infected pregnant mothers. All key factors identified in the results section can be captured in the
abstract. This will enable readers to identify key factors which impede fertility desires. These factors are well captured rows 46-55.

Findings are well triangulated with the available evidence in the discussion section. One of the limitation of the study is the design of the study itself. It is a qualitative study with no quantitative element and lacks random sampling (from a certain frame of HIV infected mothers). Therefore, finds cannot be generalized to the larger population. External validity of the study is debatable.

Conclusion: Few recommendations are documented in the last sentence of conclusion section. This needs to be strengthened. E.g. autho must deliberate how better HIV positive mother can be supported to realize their reproductive health goals? What modes, communications, system is available to support them to achieve this goal. This must be added. Conclusion section is weak and talks more about findings which must be edited.

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