Author’s response to reviews

Title: Determinants of adolescent pregnancy in sub Saharan Africa. A systematic review.

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Author’s response to reviews:

Reviewer 1

1. Background section, second sentence: acknowledge the source of information

Source of information acknowledged

2. Page 5, first paragraph: - first sentence: Make the factors (culture, gender) specific. This is because, let alone in sub-Saharan countries, there is diversity of culture in a country.

Sentence revised

3. the second sentence: what do you mean by "sex education"? Is it to mean sexuality education?;

Statement revised to mean comprehensive sexuality education

4. what "poor reproductive health services" refers? Is it to say poor services provision (supply side factor) or poor services uptake (demand side factor)?

Statement revised to mean poor reproductive health services provision

5. What is the relevance of the first paragraph of page 5? Either you didn't note here all the factors that you mentioned in your result section or you didn't remove this paragraph. This paragraph is part of our literature review which is intended give our readers a gist of the study which necessarily does not encompass our main results.

6. Page 5, second paragraph: "However, given the resource.......to reach goal", which goal? Goal of motivating adolescent girls continue school enrollment or goal of reducing adolescent pregnancy? This is because the 'however' section is expected to link with the above sentence. Please clearly state the knowledge gap ('however section of the background) that you intended to address/show in this review/assessment.
Sentence revised to mean that there has not been any review of factors associated with high adolescent pregnancy rates in sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, we intend to review determinants of adolescent pregnancy in sub-Saharan Africa.

7. Page 5, last paragraph, the second sentence (Studies that intended..... were also included.): This inclusion criteria is most important than the above sentence that it is good to start the paragraph with this sentence. Additionally, since you didn't use punctuation, this sentence is not clear for readers.

Paragraph revised

8. Page 6, paragraph 2:

- In the second sentence, you noted that a total of 229 original articles considering the research topic and the study area were identified but in the next sentence you have mentioned that 205 were removed considering aforementioned criterias for the second time. So, this create a confusion. So, You need to rewrite it clearly. Specifically mention: how many articles deal about adolescent pregnancy, how many of them did assess factors? How many were excluded by year of publication, and how many were removed by study area and methodological related reasons? The third sentence is not clear for readers that it needs rewriting. - Additionally, It is not recommended to start a sentence with number.

Paragraph reconstructed for better understanding

9. Page 6, paragraph 3, "Outcome variables measured

- The main outcome variables ...... and knowledge about contraceptives."

- The topic is not in line with the topic. i.e The topic says 'outcome variable' but the paragraph states about determinants or factors or independent variables.

Statement revised as “variables assessed”

10. Page 6, last paragraph, What research gaps did you identify?

Sentence revised to indicate clearly the research gap our study identified—lack of literature

11. Page 7, first paragraph: Researches should find out why........." Is it a recommendation? If yes, note in the recommendation section.

Statement has been moved to the recommended section

12. Page 7, weakness of the study section:

- How the topic being studied by diverse disciplines make you miss articles? Please make it clear!
Sentence revised to indicate clearly how our study could miss some valuable articles: Diverse disciplines deal with adolescents and adolescent pregnancies; this makes it possible to miss some articles during the search process since their findings may not be published in scientific based journals which were our main source of data

- Mention how the last two sentences can affect your study?

The sentences have been deleted because it doesn’t have any effect on the study

13. Page 7, result section, second paragraph: The sentence which says "Characteristics of participants..... and related factors" should be divided in to two sentences. One should talk about the characteristics of participants, and the other should talk about the key informants. Additionally, you didn't describe the characteristics of participants.

Paragraph revised and characteristics of participants are described separately in table 2

14. Page 7, the first paragraph of the heading "Sociocultural, environmental and Economic factors":

- Some of the factors are vague that you have to operational definitions so that reader can easily understand it. For example, sexual advances, family dysfunction, inadequate sex education, inappropriate form of recreation etc.

Operational definition of terms added

15. Some of the factors cannot be categorized in any of these themes. For example, "unwillingness to confront unfaithful partners", "positive attitude towards early sexual relationship", "early sexual debut" are individual characteristics, but not a sociocultural or environmental or economic factors.

Sentence revised

16. Page 8, in the same paragraph:- What do you mean by sex education? Is it to mean sexuality education? What was the measurement to say inadequate?

Statement revised to mean comprehensive sexuality education

17. Page 8, individual factors: "Alcohol and substance abuse...." how they defined? Is it an abuse or use?

Statement revised to mean excessive use of alcohol and substance abuse

18. Page 8, 'Health service related factors', the last sentence: Did you review how the authors assessed these two variables. i.e What data collection method/s did they used?
The authors of most included studies used interviews and focused group discussions as methods of data collection. These factors were reported through these methods.

19. Page 8, discussion section, second paragraph, the last sentence is a recommendation. Take it to recommendation section.

Sentence taken to recommendation section

20. Page 10, second paragraph, "These finding are consistent ....."What " These" refers"? 

Sentence revised.

21. Page 10, second paragraph, What is its difference with the result? In the discussion section, you need to add your explanation or argument.

Sentence revised

22. Page 10. Acknowledgement section: Why you forget to acknowledge the data source for your study?

Revised to acknowledge our source of data

Reviewer 2

23. adolescent pregnancy does not necessarily have to deny students education, if they are not forced to leave school. I think that adolescent pregnancy has many more important negative repercussions for the girl's health and development across the life course, and for her offspring

This sentence has been rephrased. Your suggestion is true, however, victims of adolescent pregnancy are not able to cope with stigma and the unwelcoming environment at schools and are often compelled to leave or defer their education. Other negative effects of adolescent pregnancy has been elaborated in paragraph three and four.

24. how did the Dominican Republic end up on this list? is not in Africa

Dominican Republic was mistakenly added to the list, it has been rectified.

25. In sub-Saharan Africa or worldwide? if the focus is on Sub-Saharan Africa, why were other articles included?

This statement has been rephrased to specify the scope of included studies

26. While the analysis lists various factors related to adolescent pregnancy, in the abstract and conclusion the authors only select a few to emphasize. Based on what did they select
these? Is there any info on the strength of the associations they found between the various factors and adolescent pregnancy? Are they all equally important?

Sentence revised to include all factors our study found to be associated with adolescent pregnancy. Our earlier thought was to minimise repetition, however, up on a thought over the reviewer’s comments we think it is necessary to include all.

27. The factors identified are not necessarily specific to sub-Saharan Africa, they are global. What would be specific to this sub region?

Sentence revised. Your observation about the factors identified in this study being similar to that of the developed world is true. However, this was our findings and we think that our readers should know about these similarities. We have mentioned those determinants we think are specific to the sub-region.

28. It is not clear whether the papers reviewed were only from studies in Sub-Saharan Africa, or worldwide. There is some contradictory information in the paper on this issue

Papers reviewed in this study were strictly from sub-Saharan Africa, however, we mistakenly mentioned Dominican Republic, which is not in sub-Saharan Africa. This issue has been resolved in the revised manuscript.