Author's response to reviews

Title: Coverage, quality of and barriers to postnatal care in rural Hebei, China: a mixed method study

Authors:

Li Chen (jennychen909@gmail.com)
Qiong Wu (wugiong063@126.com)
Michelle H.M.M.T. van Velthoven (helena.van-velthoven10@imperial.ac.uk)
Yanfeng Zhang (summyzh@126.com)
Shuyi Zhang (shuyi_zhang@163.com)
Ye Li (year_hour@126.com)
Wei Wang (class42001@126.com)
Xiaozhen Du (duxiaozhen2400@126.com)
Ting Zhang (zhangtingcv@aliyun.com)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

We would like to thank you and the reviewers for the further comments and suggestions on our manuscript: ‘Coverage, quality of and barriers to postnatal care in rural Hebei, China: a mixed method study’. We respond to the points below in italic and have attached a revised manuscript with track changes.

Our response to comments by the editor and reviewers is as follows:

**Reviewer 1 suggested the changes below:**

**Minor Essential Revisions**

Please ensure consistency and use postnatal throughout - the paragraph on definitions doesn't really 'define' and interchanges postpartum for postnatal

**Response:** We appreciate the reviewer's comment, we changed postpartum to “after birth” or “postnatal” or “during postnatal period” to fit the context.

Perhaps the title should read "Coverage, quality of and barriers to postnatal care in rural Hebei."

**Response:** To reflect on reviewer’s comment, we now changed the title into “Coverage, quality of and barriers to postnatal care in rural Hebei, China: a mixed method study”.

**Reviewer 2 suggested the changes below:**

**Discretionary revisions:**

P4: the authors cited “Every year, four million babies die in their first four weeks of life (the neonatal period) globally [3].” This is a rather old estimate. The latest estimate by the Inter-Agency Mortality Estimation group (IGME) is in fact 2.9 million. Please see “The UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation. ‘Levels and trends in child mortality: report 2013’. UNICEF, New York”

**Response:** We appreciate reviewer’s updated information on the latest estimate on neonatal mortality. We changed the above sentences and related reference.

In appendix 4, it’s shown that respondents and non-respondents have different characteristics, which points to the direction that non-respondents may be more socially privileged than respondents. Please discuss the potential bias this may introduce despite of the high response rate.

**Response:** To reflect on reviewer’s comment, we added “Besides, despite our high response rate, non-respondents compared to respondents of our household survey differed in some general characteristics (maternal Hukou, education, occupation and family size). A higher proportion of non-respondents had an urban maternal Hukou, attended high school, college or above, were worker or staff, and had ≤3 persons per family.” before “Therefore, selection bias may have influenced the generalizability of our study.” into the limitation paragraph to discuss the potential bias.

**Reviewer 3 suggested the changes below:**

The authors have done substantial revisions which I think helped to improve the paper. The manuscript follows a logical thread and the integration of quantitative and qualitative results
make the reading and understanding easier. I consider the manuscript acceptable for publication.

Response: We appreciate reviewer’s comments.