Author's response to reviews

Title: Social determinants of rest deprivation amongst Ghanaian women: national and urban-rural comparisons with data from a cross-sectional nationally representative survey

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

We are happy that the reviewers find the paper almost ready for acceptance. We respond to the reviewer’s present comments as follows:

Review by E Klerman:

1. Some text editing would be useful. There are multiple awkward sentences.

Response: The text has now been edited by a native English speaker with 35 years experience in public health and with extensive experience as an author, reviewer and editor of academic papers and journals.

2. Please always refer to the Accra and then the north sample – or vice versa.

Response: This has been done.

3. The first paragraph of the background is weak and missing some references.

Response: We respectfully disagree. Every point of fact is referenced. The paragraph is short and precise, which we feel is a good way to start a scientific paper.

Review by L Dandona:

1. The revised paper addresses the reviewers’ original concerns. However, the possible reasons for finding a significant association between some variables and rest deprivation at the national level but not at the regional levels are not adequately discussed in the paper. This could potentially be due to the smaller samples, and therefore lower power to detect the association, in each of the regions versus the overall national sample.

Response:

We have added the following text –
The differing sample sizes are problematic. Power increases with sample size, making it easier to achieve significance in larger than smaller samples, even for effects of similar size. This is well illustrated in the analyses on the predictive power of education on sleep deprivation in the largest and smallest samples (Tables 4 and 6): an OR of 1.40 reaches significances in the national sample, while an OR of 1.95 fails to reach significance in the North. It is reasonable to conclude that this is due to sample size differences. The results from this study should therefore be interpreted with care, especially for analyses comparing national and regional levels. Comparisons between the two regional samples (Greater Accra versus North), can be done with a higher degree of confidence, as the sample sizes are far more similar. In the bivariate analyses for these two regions no variables emerged as being significant in both samples. This supports the conclusion that caution should be taken when generalizing from findings in one region to another region within a country.

2. Substantial copy editing would be needed as pointed out in the review of the revised manuscript by Klerman.

Response: This has been done, as noted above, by a native English speaker with 35 years experience in public health and with extensive experience as an author, reviewer and editor of academic papers and journals.