Author's response to reviews

Title: A comparative analysis of early child health and development services and outcomes in countries with different redistributive policies

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Version: 2 Date: 3 September 2013

Author's response to reviews: see over
Re: Response to reviewer comments on MS: 5727956651032311 “A comparative analysis of early child health and development outcomes and services in countries with different redistributive policies”

Dear Dr. Smith:

Thank you for your email and providing the reviewers’ comments on our manuscript submission to BMC Public Health. Below, please find a description of the revisions made to address the helpful comments provided by the reviewers.

Reviewer: Vicente Navarro

We thank Dr. Navarro for his comments and support of this article as an important topic and of interest to BMC Public Health readers.

In response to Dr. Navarro’s recommendation to better conceptualize the article, we have added a section under “Methods – Country selection” which better describes the theoretical framework for political tradition and redistributive policies. This includes a more thorough description of Navarro’s framework, along with other countries that would be included under the various political traditions. We believe this addresses Dr. Navarro’s comment.

Reviewer: David Walsh

We thank Dr. Welsh for his detailed and helpful suggestions to improve the article.

Major compulsory revisions:

1. We agree that the topic of redistributive policies and early child health is a topic of great importance. We agree with the need to provide further detail on data sources and comparability of those sources. Further information on the data sources has been provided in the “Methods – Data sources and indicators” section. Specifically, we have separated the descriptions of various data sources, issues of methodology, and comparability into the following sections: 1) Demographic, economic, inequality, and social support, 2) Prenatal care, 3) Maternal leave, 4) Child health care, and 5) Child care and early childhood education. We have also expanded the “Discussion” section to include an assessment of the comparability of the data sources.

2. In order to address Dr. Walsh’s concerns about further data, we have included a discussion of supporting data from other studies in the “Discussion” section. Specifically, we discuss comparable findings from UNICEF. As described in the response to Dr. Navarro’s comments (above), we added additional information about other countries that fall under the various political...
traditions.

3. We agree that inclusion of more information on country choices will strengthen the paper. We have added information on strengths and weaknesses of country choices in the “Methods – Country selection” and “Discussion” sections.

4. We thank Dr. Walsh for pointing out the error in describing the Gini coefficient of the US being the highest, when this should, in fact, be Cuba. Due to comparability issues with the data point for Cuba, we have added a footnote which explains why this country was not included in the analysis (Table 1). We have addressed the other concern regarding data comparability as described under #1, above.

**Minor essential revisions:**

1. We have revised the paper to ensure all terms are defined at their first mention. The specific example of “Educa a Tu Hijo” has been fixed with first mention under “Results – Child health care”.

2. We thank Dr. Walsh for his careful read of the manuscript. We clearly do not wish to imply causality and have reworded the section he mentioned so that there will be no misinterpretation.

3. We have revised the manuscript to define and explain the measures of educational achievement in the “Methods – Child care and early childhood education” section, including the units of measurement. Units of measurement have also been added to the educational achievement measures in Table 5. We have also made formatting changes to Table 5 and believe this addresses Dr. Walsh’s concerns about clarity.

Thank you for your interest in our manuscript. We have addressed all suggestions for revision by the reviewers, and look forward to a positive response.

Best regards,

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