Author's response to reviews

Title: Factors associated with the utilisation of postnatal care services among the mothers of Nepal: Analysis of Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2011

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Author's response to reviews: see over
To

The Chief Editor

BMC Women’s Health

Subject: Submission of revised manuscript “Factor associated with the utilisation of postnatal care services among the mothers of Nepal: Analysis of Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2011”

Dear Chief Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the second revised version of our manuscript. On behalf of my co-authors, please find attached our revised manuscript of an original article entitled “Factor associated with the utilisation of postnatal care services among the mothers of Nepal: Analysis of Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2011.” We have provided a point to point response to the reviewers’ concerns and made a number of revisions as appropriate. I have attached a summary of these revisions. We would like to thank you and the reviewers for your time and allowing us to resubmit manuscript for further review.

Sincerely yours,

Vishnu KHANAL
Email: Khanal.vishnu@gmail.com
Response to the reviewers’ comments

Reviewer 1: Christiana Titaley

Minor Essential Revisions

In the Methods Section authors mentioned the issue of collinearity which forced them to select some variables over the other, e.g. selecting attendance over place of delivery. Yet in the modelling both variables were still retained in the model. Did authors decide to ignore this or were the variables entered one at a time? Because by looking at the table, people will think both variables were included at the same time in Model 3. Although I think both variables are ok to be in the final model, there is some inconsistency between text and table. This is also the case for timing and number of ANC variables.

Authors’ response:

Thank you for noting this. We included these variables one at a time. We have now highlighted it in the methodology and also in the tables that reviewer has suggested. In addition, we had done similar steps for mother’s age and birth order (more explanation in the following comments).

I think the issue of collinearity between maternal age and other covariates still exists for both outcomes. The unadjusted OR of mothers from higher maternal age were significantly lower than those from 15-19; yet, in the final model (Model 3) the direction of the effect changed, to significantly higher than those aged 15-19. This is important since it will impact the interpretation of the findings, conclusion and the recommendations given.

Authors’ response:

We understand the reviewer’s concern. This issue was also raised by reviewer 2. We found that the mother’s age and birth order were highly correlated ($r = 0.85$). As with number of ANC and timing of ANC, we have included one variable (mother’s age and birth order) at a time in the final model. This process led a different finding than before that birth order and mother’s age were not statistically significant in final model. We have removed the highly correlated explanatory variables from the regression models.
Please check some spelling mistakes. There are few typos e.g.: Methods Section page 5: "Outcome variables", Discussion Section page 12, 3rd paragraph line 3 should read "services", or page 13 2nd paragraph line 2, should read "findings". Please use the spell check.

Authors’ response:

Thank you for your comment. This has been noted and addressed.

Some paragraphs are still very lengthy, such as 1st paragraph in the Discussion section. Authors might want to break it down to two or three paragraphs.

Authors’ response:

Thank you for your comment. This has been noted and paragraphs have been made smaller. We have also reduced the length of the longer sentences.

The issue of mothers in law who might potentially influence the decision was not demonstrated in the findings. Authors might want to remove it from the first paragraph, or explain it later as one of the possibilities.

Authors’ response:

The content discussing the influence of the mother-in-law has been removed from the discussion.

Please check the decimal digits to ensure their consistency

Authors’ response:

This has been noted and addressed.
Reviewer 2

David Doku

Judging from the last paragraph on page 14, it is a bit strange that the "variables" younger mothers and mothers with high parity predict the outcome in similar direction. One would expect that younger mother are those with low parity and mothers with high parity are older mothers. Did the authors explore the correlation between age and parity?

Authors’ response:

This question was also raised by reviewer 1. We checked correlation of mother’s age and birth order and found that they were positively correlated ($r = 0.85$). This led us to re-analyse the regression models. The new models are presented in Table 2.

Page 3 last paragraph there is a contradiction in the data presented here. The figures show an increase pace but the text states a decreased pace from 1996-2011

Authors’ response:

We have revised the last paragraph clarifying the point we wanted to makes - that neonatal mortality has not reduced as much as maternal mortality.

Page 5. What is the rationale for combining missing responses with “no response” or “late postnatal care”? This is a major problem in the methodology.

Authors’ response:

We note the concerns expressed by the reviewer. We have rechecked the data and there were no missing responses in Any postnatal care variable (M50). With regard to immediate postnatal care (timing), two responses were missing among those who reported to have attended PNC, and the rests were from those who did not attend PNC. Given that our variable of interest is “immediate postnatal care” among all women, the small number of missing value (n=2) would not change the finding.
significantly. We assumed, this approach would reduce the chance of false positive report of immediate postnatal care.

Page 6. It is not clear what the order of ranking of the autonomy variable is looking at the categorisation. What do the authors imply?

Authors’ response:

Responses to the question (  ) “ who makes the final decision regarding health care ” were re-categorised as : (i) woman alone (high autonomy), (ii) woman with partner/other (medium autonomy), and (iii) partner alone/someone else (no autonomy). This re-categorisation of the responses has been reported previously).


Still on page 6, the authors should present the percentage of Hindus rather than simply stating that they are the majority.

Authors’ response:

This has been noted and revised accordingly.

Page 7. Reference to West 2008 is noted, nevertheless the authors should highlight briefly how they use Complex Simple Analysis Procedure to address the issue of cluster sampling.

Authors’ response:

We have included a more detailed description of how Complex Simple Analysis was used to address the issue of cluster sampling.

Results and Discussion

Page 11. “In Nepal … mother and the newborn are not allowed to be touched by anyone in the house or go out of the house has been previously reported in other parts of Asia [28, 29]
and has been found to discourage postnatal care attendance [29].” This sentence is not clear, especially given that the references are not from studies in Nepal.

Authors’ response:

Thank you for your comment. This has been noted and references from Nepal have been included.

Page 12. The first sentence that has been added is not really clear. Could the authors clarify this?

Authors’ response:

Thank you for your comment. This has been noted and addressed.

The entire manuscript needs rigorous editing for typo errors. Numerous of them are found in the result section, particularly on pages 9-10. And there are several of them in the entire manuscript.

Authors’ response:

Thank you for your comment. This has been noted and addressed.