Author's response to reviews

Title: Differential effect of Wealth Quintile on Modern Contraceptive Use and Fertility: Evidence from Malawian Women

Authors:

Ayo S Adebowale Mr (Adesteve2006@yahoo.com)
Sunday A Adedini Mr (adedinisunday@yahoo.com)
Latifat Ibisomi Ms (libisomi@yahoo.com)
Martin E Palamuleni Mr (Martin.palamuleni@nwu.ac.za)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Reviewer's report 1
Title: Differential effect of Wealth Quintile on Modern Contraceptive Use and Fertility: Evidence from Malawian Women
Version: 1 Date: 3 June 2013
Reviewer: abdulkarim mairiga

Reviewer's report:
Major Compulsory Revisions
Referencing section need to be reviewed by the authors to conform to the BMC requirement

Response:
The reference section has now been reviewed according to BMC women health guideline

Minor Essential Revisions
1. Title page: E-mail addresses of the co-authors not indicated (editorial issue).

   Response:
   We have included the email addresses of all the co-authors in this revised version

2. Background:
   a) Missing words that makes sentences vague e.g. 2nd paragraph, second sentence.

   Response:
   We have revised the background section completely.

   b) On the same paragraph, 4th sentence need to be supported by reference

   Response:
   We have included the reference

3. Methods:
   a) Data collection: 3rd Paragraph, What did the figures “5085 and 2290 women aged 15 - 49” represent? Which are the poorest and is for the richest?

   Response:
   Figures 5085 and 2290 represent women aged 15-49 who were analysed for ever and current use of modern contraceptive respectively after excluding some women who did not meet inclusion criteria for the study.

   Only women who belong to either poorest or richest wealth quintile were included in the analysis while others were excluded. All women that do not provide information on contraceptive utilization status were regarded as missing values and those who have never had sexual intercourse were removed from the analysis.

   For current use of contraception, aside the above excluded set of women, those who are menopausal, currently pregnant, breast feeding in the last six months, not sexually active in the last four weeks before the survey were also excluded.
b) Definition of key:
   (i) 1st sentence on defining ever use of MC should be corrected

   **Response**
   This has been corrected in this revised version. Thank you.

   (ii) Same thing on defining current use of MC, the sentence should be corrected.

   **Response**
   This has been corrected in this revised version. Thank you.

   (iii) Second sentence under the definition of WQ should be supported with references of the studies. So also the 3rd sentence needs to be referenced for further enquiry.

   **Response**
   We have included the reference as suggested. Thank you.

4. Results: What is CEB? This has not been explained anywhere

   **Response**
   CEB means children ever born. We have now defined as appropriate in the text.

5. References: Does not conform to the journal (BMC Women Health) requirement

   **Response:**
   The reference section has now been reviewed according to BMC women health guideline

**Discretionary Revisions**

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Response:**
Thank you

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Response:**
The whole manuscript has been completely reviewed editorially. Thank you.

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests
Reviewer's report 2
Title: Differential effect of Wealth Quintile on Modern Contraceptive Use and Fertility: Evidence from Malawian Women
Version: 1 Date: 1 December 2013
Reviewer: Abhishek Kumar

Reviewer's report:
6. Major Compulsory revision
14 Minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.

In the present study, the authors examined the differentials effect of household wealth on modern contraceptive use and children ever born in Malawi. The topic is of important in context of dealing high fertility across economic groups in the country and appropriate for publication in the journal. However, the authors need to modify the manuscript thoroughly before it could be considered for publication. In general, the paper should be thoroughly edited for the language. Below is my specific comments which need to addressed in order to make this paper publishable.

(1) Title
Title is good. But authors may think in different way “Economic differentials in modern contraceptive use and fertility in Malawi” …………. [IT’S UP TO AUTHOR]

Response
Thank you. The authors have agreed to retain the old title since wealth index in this study context is slightly different from economic index.

(2) Abstract
2.1. It would be better to specify the dependent variables in the background/method section.

Response
This has now been included in the background/method section.

2.2. Abbreviate the CEB in the results section when it comes first.

Response
This has adjusted accordingly.

2.3. Fifth sentence of your result section “Ever and current use of MC… and age at birth” is not clear. Please rephrase this statement.

Response
The statement has been rephrased.

2.4. Conclusion should come from your findings. If possible, analyse the reasons for non-using of modern method across the wealth quintiles – if data permit.

Response
This is a good suggestion, we have included this as area for further research and we have also adjusted the conclusion section in line with the suggestion.

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISION

(3) Background

3.1. In first paragraph of background section few reference are required……

Response
We have included the missing references.

3.2. Background section also needs a paragraph indicating why poor has lower use of contraceptive and fertility. This may come from review from other countries.

Response
This has now been included.

(4) Methods

4.1. Methods section needs a bit elaboration. Particularly about sampling design, and sample size.

Response
We have included this in the revised version of the manuscript. Thank you.

4.2. Define the dependent variables properly. What are the categories of the dependent variable? It may be useful to justify your methods.

Response
This has now been included in the method section. It was an oversight. Thank you.

4.3. Rephrase the wealth quintile paragraphs. It is not the standard way of defining wealth quintile using household assets data.

Response
Alright! We have revised the definition.

4.4. Better to use few methods which reflect economic inequality, like concentration index, concentration curve, rich/poor ratio.

Response
These suggestions are good areas to explore possibly in our future research as the available information in the current data may not permit
such computations. This is one of the limitations of studies that relied on secondary data. Thank you.

(5) Result

5.1. It is ok. But you are mostly talking about differentials across other entities rather than household wealth.

Response
We have included more information on household wealth as measured by wealth quintile as rightly suggested. However, the information across other entities are important since we used them as control in the multivariate analyses.

(6) Discussion and conclusion

6.1. Same thing observed (as observed in result section).

Response
Please, see our response in 5.1

6.2. Fourth paragraph of your discussion section need to revise, not clear.

Response
Alright! We have revised this accordingly.

6.3. Conclusion is flimsy. Should be elucidated with reference to ongoing policies “if any” of Malawi.

Response
We have revised the conclusion completely with reference to relevant policies in Malawi.

(7) Table & Figure

7.1. Title of table 1 need to be revised. It is not distribution rather than differences.

Response
We have revised the title as recommended.

7.2. No need of column 3 and 6 in the table. Better to give only total numbers in each segment.

Response
Good observation! We have revised the entries.

7.3. There is inconsistency in reporting of p value in table 1. The table also required a foot note.

Response
The table has been adjusted in line with your suggestion. Please see the table
7.4. Keep all categories of wealth quintile in all tables.

Response
We don’t think it is necessary for all the categories of wealth index to appear in the tables as suggested. Our study and data focused only on women in poorest and richest wealth quintiles. Other categories of women have been excluded from the study as earlier discussed in the background and method sections.

7.5. Table 2 and 3 is too busy and lost its focus. Restrict up to two decimal points. Follow standard way of p-value reporting

Response
We have made adjustment where necessary.

Thank you.