Reviewer’s report

Title: What changes poor mothers’ child care-seeking behaviors?: a cross sectional study in Granada, Nicaragua

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Reviewer: Florence Mirembe

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Am wondering about the title, the word “Change”. I think change is observed over time. I find a cross sectional study having a problem to observe change? What do you think?

Abstract

In the result section; Sentence 2 starting with “We also determined-------“This sentence is in the paragraph for methods. In the same paragraph, the sentence starting with “second choice varied” may be you need to consider mentioning the varied choices.

Background.

It is rather long, and no Key words are spelt out

Methods:

Here there is target population and inclusion criteria put together. These can be separated for clarity.

Sampling:

It will be nice to beef up the sampling procedure. It is unclear how you sampled the different clusters at each stage. Describe the randomization process. Also outline how you got to the sample size of 356 for each urban and rural. Are these house holds or individual women. Suppose in the household you had two women who qualified to be recruited, how did you handle that situation?

Data Collection

The data was collected in 2002, is it still valid 7 years later?

I also think the process of data collection should be described in more details to appreciate the process.

Results:

Predictors of Change; this study was a cross sectional one how did you find out about change?

a) For change you need a different study design,

b) Need a follow up study
Didn't you think that what was observed was a process of taking a positive action other than change as this may be the norm in that community and it was also observed once not over time?

Table 1:
While household income was used to group the level of economic status, the same groups seem not to be for the children’s ages, and mothers’ level of education as the groups do not cater for age ranges or tell us anything about the mothers’ education levels. The two variables might need to be presented differently.

Table 2:
Child death, I wonder whether 85% of the babies /or the women in group 3 had had an experience of death of a child. It looks unrealistic!

Discussion:
Was a health post a choice or was it chosen because of proximity? Poverty and lack of transport means among the poor mothers! Is that what they would have wished for their children? .I see the mothers realized that in these health posts at times the providers were not there and that the health posts probably did not offer satisfactory care what are your thoughts about this response?. This has far reaching implications for children of the poor mothers in terms of survival!!

I therefore feel the recommendations need to be modified. Please think about it.