Author's response to reviews

Title: Completion of the modified World Health Organization (WHO) partograph during labour in public health institutions of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Point-by-point response to reviewers’ comments on the manuscript entitled “Completion of the modified World Health Organization (WHO) partograph during labour in public health institutions of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia” (MS: 3708683529179122).

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We are very grateful for the very constructive and valuable comments both reviewers provided us. We have taken due consideration of the comments provided and made all necessary revisions to the manuscript. We have provided a point-by-point response to the comments as follows.

Response to Matthews Mathai
Major comments:

Comment: The authors report on the "use" of the modified WHO partograph during labour but report only on completeness of recordings. Was the partograph used only for recording events in labour OR was it used primarily as a tool to guide the management of labour? If it was only the former, the study title should refer to completion of partographs and not to "use".

Authors’ response: Thank you for this very essential observation. Our intention was to see use of the partograph by reviewing the recordings of each parameters of the partograph during labour retrospectively through document review. However, after your valuable comment, we have now learnt that our study was all about assessing the completion of the partograph parameters during labour. Understanding this observation, we have replaced the term “use” by “completion” all around the text in the manuscript starting from the title where necessary. We have given conclusion only with regard to the assessment of completion of the modified WHO partograph and we have also discussed the limitations of the study in relation to use at the end of the discussion section before the conclusions.

Comment: Selection: Overall 420 partographs were reviewed. However, the selection methods described are confusing. For example, on pg 7, "the study subjects were comprised of a random sample of the modified WHO partograph”. Further down the same page, it states that the study included "all the modified partographs with complete and partially complete information from the selected public health institutions and excluded those the modified WHO partographs which had no information recorded on them such as partograph sheets on which only delivery summary is recorded...". There are also several exclusion criteria. On Pg 8 and 9, there is reference to a multi-stage sampling technique.

Authors’ response: We stated multistage sampling technique because we have undergone two stages in order to select the partographs. In the first stage, we randomly selected 5 health facilities (2 hospitals and 3 health centres) from all maternity service provider public health institutions (25 health centres and 5 hospitals) using simple random sampling. In the second stage, we employed systematic sampling method, to select the partographs allocated to each of the 5 selected public health institutions. As a result of this, this study was undertaken employing two stages sampling which is a multistage sampling technique. We have given brief explanation...
of this process under “Sampling method” on pages 8 and 9 in the revised manuscript and we feel now we have got rid of the confusion. We have included partographs having complete or partially complete information and excluded those not meeting the inclusion criteria as they were not useful for this study.

**Comment:** Were entire records classified as substandard if they did not meet "any one of the protocol standards" or had "parts misplaced/missing or inadequate" (Pg 9) OR the recordings for each variable considered standard/substandard as reported in Table 3. If it the latter, the description should be revised in the text on Pg9.

**Authors’ response:** We have used the terms “standard/substandard/not recorded” for the recordings for each parameter (variable) on the partograph. And now we have entirely revised the description on the page 9 in accordance with your comment.

**Response to Richard J Derman**

**Comment:** We continue to learn that “real world” experience does not necessarily follow evidence-based practices. And while this is not a comparative study showing differences in outcomes, the poor use of the WHO sanctioned partogram suggests the need for ongoing analysis as to why the lack of utilization and should inform further research. The paper requires “tight” editing but, I believe is should be published.

**Authors’ response:** Thank you. We are very grateful for your support in editing the manuscript by allotting your valuable time for this matter. We have entirely incorporated the comments you provided in the text of the manuscript hand written. Our incorporation of the comments is accessible in the revised manuscript in track changes.