Author’s response to reviews

Title: Identifying risk factors for perinatal death at Tororo District Hospital, Uganda: a casecontrol study

Authors:

Martha Tesfalul (martha.tesfalul@ucsf.edu)
Paul Natureeba (pnature@gmail.com)
Nathan Day (nathan.day05@gmail.com)
Ochar Thomas (thomasochar77@gmail.com)
Stephanie Gaw (stephanie.gaw@ucsf.edu)

Version: 3 Date: 03 Jan 2020

Author’s response to reviews:

Editor Comments:

1. Well done on this extensive revision. Please address the minor comments of the reviewer below. The point about wide CI could be added to the limitation section with a caution about interpretation and generalizability.

We greatly appreciate the recognition of our effort to improve our manuscript to make it not only more suitable for publication but also a more accurate representation of our findings. In that vein, we have added a line acknowledging that, "Given the small sample size, the confidence intervals of certain variables were wide and thus need to be interpreted with caution." (lines 241-242)

Reviewer Comments:

Jillian Pintye, PhD (Reviewer 2):
2. Thank you for thoroughly addressing all reviewer comments. The manuscript is much improved in its current form. My only comments are on the presentation of results in the tables. For example, Table 1 has "Median (Range)" in the column header but than "3046.9 (463.8)" is presented for birth weight in grams. It is important to distinguish whether the "range" indicated is the absolute range or interquartile range (IQR), the latter being more conventionally reported. Additionally, usually the IQR is presented as an actually range of 2 values (e.g., 3046.9 (XX-XX)) rather than one value.

We regret this oversight on our part- we had originally documented in Table 1 the means and standard deviations for continuous variables, but we have revised the table to reflect the median value and interquartile range for maternal age and birth weight. Here are the edited portions of the table and footnotes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control pregnancies</th>
<th></th>
<th>Case pregnancies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 3541</td>
<td></td>
<td>N= 1851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n (% ) or</td>
<td></td>
<td>n (% ) or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median (IQR)</td>
<td>Maternal Age (years) 23 (19—29) 25 (20–30) --</td>
<td>Birth weight (kilograms, kg)33.1 (2.7—3.3) 2.8 (1.7 – 3.2) --</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OR, odds ratio, CI, confidence interval, IQR Interquartile Range

3. Lastly, some of the 95% CI for correlates of adverse outcomes are extremely wide and these estimates should be interpreted with caution where applicable.

We agree with this important comment and have added a line acknowledging that, "Given the small sample size, the confidence intervals of certain variables were wide and thus need to be interpreted with caution." (lines 241-242)