Author’s response to reviews

Title: Childbirth care in Egypt: A repeat cross-sectional analysis using Demographic and Health Surveys between 1995 and 2014 examining use of care, provider mix and immediate postpartum care content

Authors:
Miguel Pugliese-Garcia (Miguel.Pugliese-Garcia@lshtm.ac.uk)
Emma Radovich (Emma.Radovich@lshtm.ac.uk)
Oona Campbell (Oona.Campbell@lshtm.ac.uk)
Nevine Hassanein (nvnhassanein@yahoo.com)
Karima Khalil (karimahkhalil@gmail.com)
Lenka Benova (lbenova@itg.be)

Version: 1 Date: 28 Dec 2019

Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Dr Mahdy and colleagues,

Thank you very much for looking into our manuscript in detail and coming with feedback to make it stronger and more relevant. We appreciate your time and effort.

Please, kindly find below a point-by-point response for the reviewed manuscript. In our comment matrix, we provide a detailed response to each reviewer/editorial point raised, describing what amendments have been made to the manuscript text and where these can be found.

Kind regards,
Miguel Pugliese and colleagues

Editor:
The manuscript focuses on an important topic. The data is good and the study is sound. The language needs some improvement before publication.
The reviewers have given good comments. The author is requested to respond to these comments, point by point, and make the necessary corrections in the manuscript.
Response:
Thank you for your time assessing this report, we appreciate the positive editorial and reviewer’s feedback. We have reviewed the language of the document. Please kindly find the response for the reviewer’s comments, point by point, below.
Reviewer 1
The manuscript by Pugliese-Garcia et al focuses on an important public health issue facing most developing countries. The manuscript is well written, however some references are missing in the text and the methods section is too long. See my comments below:
Response: We thank the reviewer very much for their detailed feedback and comments which have helped us improve the manuscript.
Reviewer 1:
Response: Lines 72-73
Thank you for highlighting this. We have now adjusted the references and text to provide clarity on which references covered this statement. We have also added one additional reference we believe is valuable to support this statement.
R1:
2. Page 5 line 110-113: Merge "Population" with "Data" Lines 110-112
Response: Thank you. We have now merged the subsections “Population” and “data” as recommended. Please find them in “Data and study Population”
R1:
3. Page 6 & 7: Most of the detailed indicators/variables defined in these subsections should be moved to the supplementary materials and summarize all the "indicators and definitions" without the subheadings
For example:
Women in need of childbirth care, location of 121 delivery and delivery attendant- supplementary materials Sector of childbirth care provision (public or private)- supplementary materials Household Wealth- supplementary materials Subnational regions - supplementary materials Components of immediate postpartum care on 2014 survey- supplementary materials
Rewrite/restructure/summarize the "indicators and definitions" part. Pages 6,7 and 8
Many thanks for this recommendation. We have moved the detailed definitions of indicators/variables to Supplementary Material 1.
Response: Following the reviewer’s advice, we have also restructured and summarized the information in the methods section.
R1:
4. Add an annotated map showing the administrative regions considered in this study. Figure 1, lines 127-128
Response: Many thanks for your recommendation. We have included Figure 1 (line 128) a map showing the administrative regions considered in our study.
R1:
5. Page 13 line 283. Studies (31-33) Response: Lines 283-286
Thank you. We have included the references (31-33) after “Studies” as indicated and adjusted the text to make clear what content is contained in each reference included.

R1:
   Lines 315-316
   Response:
   Thank you for your feedback. This information is included in reference 31, which has been placed now correctly. The text has been adjusted to reflect this.

R1:
7. Page 15 line 340: Check the reference style for Bayoumi et al., 2017 and add it to the list of references.
   Line 341
   Response:
   Thank you very much for spotting this. We have corrected the reference’s style and added it to the list of references.

R1:
   Page 16
   Response:
   Thank you for your feedback. We believe there may be an error with the line number in this comment, as lines 315-316 are not on page 16 and are also mentioned above for page 14. We have clarified the text on Page 16, but please kindly let us know if your initial concern was not addressed.

R1:
9. The limitation should include the fact that DHS surveys are conducted every 4-5 years and previously surveyed households may not be selected in subsequent surveys.
   Lines 426-428
   Response:
   Thank you for your input to the limitations section. We have added this limitation now.

R1:
Discretionary
10. Figure 3 is best presented using a side by side bar plot.
   Response:
   Thank you very much for your suggestion, we appreciate it very much but we believe the current figure provides a better combined reading of the temporal and wealth dimensions we want to describe on the paper. We decided to keep the figure in its original format.

Reviewer 2
The manuscript is well written and informative. The study objectives are clearly written.
Response:
We thank the reviewer for their time and comments, which have helped us improve the manuscript.

R2:
The discussion however, has a few speculations rather than facts especially regarding the reason behind the increase in the private sector deliveries. Each speculation could be true but evidences should be provided too.
Response:
Thank you very much for your feedback. There were some areas of the discussion where the reference was not adequately placed. Following reviewer 1’s feedback, we have adjusted these to improve clarity on what information backed our statements.
R2:
The data presentation could be simplified by giving stratas of the population i.e. wealthy or poor.
Response:
Thank you for this suggestion, but given the equity issues in Egypt and the sample size, we feel it’s better to retain more categories in analysis.

R2
The five regions mentioned in manuscript would be confusing for a non Egyptian and within the Table provided, these region were not portrayed.
Response:
Thank you for your feedback. We agree that the paper can provide further clarity on the Egyptian regions. In line with your feedback and Reviewer’s 1 recommendation, we have included Figure 1 (lines 127-128); a map showing the administrative regions considered in this study.