Reviewer's report

Title: Outcomes of and barriers to cataract surgery in Sao Paulo State, Brazil - a public health intervention study

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Reviewer: Youngsub Eom

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This study evaluated outcomes of cataract surgery and possible barriers to attend referral hospitals of patients who were screened at an Ophthalmic Mobile Unit. The result of this study demonstrated that the barriers to cataract surgery is higher age, greater distance to the hospital, municipalities with fewer inhabitants and less ophthalmic services. In terms of outcomes of cataract surgery, the treatment was effective and complied with the recommendations of the WHO.

The result of this study provides data that can be used to develop public healthcare initiatives.

I have some suggestions to try to improve it.

1. [Abstract, Page 5, LL45-47]
   The conclusion of the abstract is "The barriers to cataract surgery was higher age, greater distance to the hospital, municipalities with fewer inhabitants and less ophthalmic services." However, in the results section, patients who did not attend had statistically better local coverage by ophthalmic surgeons, statistically greater availability of ophthalmologic equipment at municipal primary healthcare facilities and statistically better municipal hospital services and infrastructure to perform phacoemulsification. The conclusion of the abstract and the results are somewhat inconsistent with each other.

   The term of less ophthalmic services is unclear.

2. [Methods, Page 8, Lines 47-53]

   In eyes with not being able to obtain optical biometry, AL was measured with an ultrasonic biometer and IOL power was calculated with IOLMaster in this study. The AL measured with IOLMaster is converted by the equation to be equal to that obtained by immersion ultrasound in the average case. However, the AL reading with contact ultrasound may be confounded by indentation of the cornea and is not interchangeable with the AL achieved with IOLMaster. Thus, if the value of AL measured by the applanation was used in IOL power calculation with IOLMaster, it could be one of the causes of refractive errors.
3. [Discussion, Page 13, LL47-50]

"Although females were the predominately reported to the referral hospital, there was no statistical difference between genders (p>0.05)." This sentence is unclear. Authors seem to say that gender did not affect the visit to the referral hospital. Please rephrase to better express your intended meaning.

4. A P value is a number between 0 and 1, and a P value of 0.000 is impossible. Thus, when investigators get a P value of 0.000, it is recommended to express it as P value < 0.001. When a P value of 1.000, it is recommended to express it as P value > 0.999 or to round it down to 0.9999.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

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I am able to assess the statistics

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