Author’s response to reviews

Title: Child Marriage in Ghana: Evidence from a Multi-Method Study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Reviewer reports:

Shanta Pandey (Reviewer 1):
Comment 1: The authors have adequately addressed my previous comments. Glad that child marriage is declining in Ghana. My only comment is, in the discussion, perhaps, the authors could comment on the current rate of decline and how this plays out in terms of attaining the SDG's goal of eliminating child marriage by 2030.

Response: Thank you very much for this helpful suggestion. We have revised the discussion section by adding to the paragraph that “At this rate of decline, Ghana will most likely not meet the Sustainable Development Goal 5, Target 5.3, which seeks to eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage by 2030.”, since the decline in child marriage among girls aged 20-24 between 2008 (24.58%) and 2014 (20.68%) was only about four percent (4%). See discussion section, pages 25 to 26.

Alexander Krämer (Reviewer 2):
BMC Women's Health

Child Marriage in Ghana: Evidence from a Multi-Method Study

Reviewer recommendation and comments for manuscript No. BMWH-D-18-00743R2

Summary:
The authors submitted a revised manuscript based on the recommendations and critical statements made. Most of the requested revisions have been made in the revised version of the manuscript. I have some minor but essential comments to the authors.
Comment 1: On page 5 in the background section, first paragraph, it should read "... and they turn to agree ..." (instead of) "and the child to agree ..."
Response: Thank you very much for this important suggestion. We have revised the sentence from "and the child to agree ..." (to) "... and they turn to agree ...". See page 5.

Comment 2: On page 9, the full meaning of DHS should be provided since it is the first time DHS is mentioned.
Response: Thank you very much. We have revised the sentence by adding the full meaning of DHS, Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). See methods section, page 9.

Comment 3: Sample size used for the study is only mentioned in the response to reviewers but not in the Methods section of the manuscript.
Response: Thank you very much for this comment. We have revised the manuscript and included the sample size. In the revised manuscript, we indicated that “This resulted in a sample size of 1,571 (weighted sample size = 1,613)”. See methods section, page 8.

Comment 4: The descriptive results in Table 1 show that 26% of the women in the sample were in the fourth wealth quintile category and not in the highest wealth quintile category as stated by the authors on page 11.
Response: Thank you very much. We have corrected this in the revised manuscript by taking out “highest” and replacing it with “fourth”. See results section, page 11.

Comment 5: Table 1, explain why the total score for wealth quintile is 1,614 and not the weighted sample of 1613 used in the study.
Response: The total sample size is 1,613. However, the summation of the frequencies for the categories of wealth quintile sums up to 1,614 due to rounding offs. See the demonstration below.

Frequency of wealth quintile in decimal places:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wealth index</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. poorest</td>
<td>228.55</td>
<td>14.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. poorer</td>
<td>259.66</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. middle</td>
<td>386.92</td>
<td>23.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. richer</td>
<td>412.65</td>
<td>25.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. richest</td>
<td>325.1</td>
<td>20.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After rounding off the frequencies, the values sum up to 1,614:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wealth index</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. poorest</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>14.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. poorer</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. middle</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>23.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. richer</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>25.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. richest</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>20.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1614</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hence we have indicated under the Table 1 that “* this may not sum up to 1,613 due to rounding offs.” See results section, page 12.

Comment 6: On page 10, were the districts and communities involved in the Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews selected for this study and if yes, how? The authors only explained how the participants were recruited.

Respondents: Thank you very much for this comment. The districts and communities involved in the Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews were purposively selected from UNFPA country program support regions (Central, Northern and Greater Accra). We have revised the manuscript to include the sampling technique, which was purposive sampling. See methods section, page 7.