Author’s response to reviews

Title: Is there a financial incentive to immigrate? Examining of the health worker salary gap between India and popular destination countries

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Author’s response to reviews:

REVIEWER 1

1. The work is a descriptive study, with no proven connection between the independent variables (wages) and the dependent variable (the migration or retention in India of the health professional). It is not properly an investigation therefore. It has the implicit assumption of the force of the wage differences, but it does not verify it. As such, it should not be published as a scientific article in the journal. It needs to rework by establishing the existence of a causal attribution or not and to what extent. It would have been necessary to consider other potentially explanatory variables to verify the explanatory force of the wage differences.

This paper never sought to prove the connection between wages and migration. Previous literature has suggested that larger salaries available abroad entice Indian HRH to migrate. Whilst salaries are commonly identified as a significant factor for fuelling migration, the extent of these salary differentials are unknown. This study seeks to determine these differentials using PPP methodology. High or low salary differentials may make little or no difference to individual’s decision to migrate – this paper does not assert either way. However, large salary differentials hold the hypothesis true that this, as other literature has posited is a pull factor for Indian HRH. It is furthermore beyond the scope of this paper to determine the explanatory variables which account for these salary differences. We have, however, discussed this are a potential area for future research.

REVIEWER 2

1. The article is informative but I believe it can be strengthened by explaining what is meant by ‘unqualified providers'.

We have removed the reference to ‘unqualified providers’
2. There is a lot of information in the tables that has not been explained in the results or discussion.

The results section has been expanded and now unpacks the tables.

3. The impact of experience and specialty in the comparison countries should be elaborated on.

Noted – this has been elaborated on in the results section.

4. Supply and demand in each country has a significant impact on salaries. This could be discussed more fully.

Whilst true, we feel this is beyond the scope of this paper. This paper deliberately not discussed the market drivers for wages in the countries under review. No study to date has looked at determining the real salaries of HRH in India and the selected destination countries to identify the differentials using PPP methodology. This is the contribution of this study to the broader literature on migration. This has been better expressed in the background section.

5. It would also be useful to make sure that the data being used is the latest available.

We have used updated data where available.

6. A discussion of the impact of gross and net salaries on the analysis will also be useful.

This has been noted and discussed.

7. In Canada the majority of physicians are independent contractors who have their own practices and must pay for the overheads related to running them.

This has been noted and inserted into the methodology section. The results have also been adjusted accordingly.

8. I believe a short paragraph suggesting a line of continued research would be useful.
We have inserted a paragraph highlighting future areas of research.

Thank you.