Author’s response to reviews

Title: Demand for family planning satisfied with modern methods among sexually active women in low- and middle-income countries: who is lagging behind?

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Version: 2 Date: 08 Feb 2018

Author’s response to reviews:

We would like to thank both reviewers for the careful reading and for all the comments and suggestions on the manuscript.

Reviewer #1:

1) According to the Methods section, page 7, lines 2-3, age was broken down to 15-17, 18-19, 20-49 year old groups. However, the only results regarding age in the updated manuscript refer to women less than 19 years old (as shown in Table 3). Is this group actually women less than or equal to 19? The Methods section should be updated to define this group (For example, "Analyses were stratified by women's age (<19 years and >=19 years)... ").

Authors’ reply: the methods session is correct. In Table 3 all countries with at least one group (15-17 or 18-19 years) with mDFPS <20% are marked. The age range in the row title was removed, so now the title is just “Younger”.

2) Discussion section, page 10, lines 1-2 - the source given (35) seems to be examining effectiveness (i.e. typical use), not efficacy (i.e. perfect use).

Authors’ reply: The reviewer is correct, we changed it in the manuscript.
3) Discussion section, page 11, line 27 - the word "effectivity" should be replaced with "effectiveness".

Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Reviewer #2:

Tables and Figures:

Table 3: Suggestion to revise the table title to state: "Demand for family planning satisfied with modern contraceptive methods (mDFPS) below 20% by country and subgroup."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Table 3: "Animist" should be written as "Animism", which is the religion's name.

Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Figure 2 Note: The note for Figure 2 should be split into 2 sentences. Suggested revision: "The darker colored countries have an overall mDFPS below 20%. The lighter colored countries have an overall mDFPS above 20%, yet these countries have at least one subgroup with mDFPS below 20%.

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Table S1: Suggestion to revise the table title to state: "Countries without information on reproductive health among unmarried, sexually active women, excluded from the analyses."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Table S2: Suggestion to revise the table title to state: "Demand for family planning satisfied with modern contraceptive methods (mDFPS) below 20% by country and subgroup."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.
Table S2: "Animist" should be written as "Animism", which is the religion's name.

Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Table S2: Is there any reason why "Central African Republic" is in bold font? If no, please remove bold font to match the other countries.

Authors’ reply: There was no reason for that. Corrected in the manuscript.

Abstract:

Lines 20-22: Suggested rewrite to remove "women's": "Subgroups with low coverage (mDFPS below 20%) were identified according to marital status, wealth, age, education, literacy, area of residence (urban or rural), geographic region, and religion."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 28-31: Suggested rewrite: "West & Central Africa showed the lowest coverage (mean mDFPS = 33%); whereas, South Asia had the highest coverage (mean mDFPS = 71%)."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript, but both South Asia and LAC were kept as the highest coverage (both around 70%): “West & Central Africa showed the lowest coverage (32.9% mean mDFPS), whereas South Asia and Latin America & the Caribbean had the highest coverage (approximately 70% mean mDFPS).”

Line 38: Low mDFPS coverage should be defined by revising to state "low mDFPS coverage (<20%)."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Line 40: Add "countries". Suggested revision: "country-level, yet in many of these countries, mDFPS coverage..."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.
Line 52: Please remove "As often is the case" and add "illiterate" and "living in rural areas". Suggested revision: "Subgroups requiring special attention include women who are poor, uneducated/illiterate, young, and living in rural areas."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Plain English Summary:

Line 28: Please correct the font for "in the" before "youngest age groups" to match the manuscript text font.

Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Introduction section:

Line 21, page 4: "Improve" should be written as "improved". Suggested rewrite: "…will directly contribute to improved maternal and child health outcomes."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Methods section:

Line 2, page 7: Please remove "very". For consistency throughout the manuscript, it is suggested to state only "low coverage" defined as mDFPS below 20%, instead of as "very low" or "extremely low".

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 2-5, page 7: Since the authors are stratifying on categories of age ranges not used previously in the literature, the authors should explain why these specific categories of age ranges are being used for the analyses.

Authors’ reply: We added to the manuscript “The logic of the age grouping was not risk, but social vulnerability. Our approach aimed at highlighting how the adolescents fare in terms of family planning compared to adult women.”
Results section:

Line 46, page 7: "CEEE" should be "CEE". Suggested rewrite to add (<50% modern): "Diverse countries from CEE & CIS have low reliance on modern contraception (<50% modern)."

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 49-51, page 7: Suggestion to remove "Armenia" and "Bosnia and Herzegovina" add "Kosovo" to the countries relying on traditional contraception. These countries have a % modern <30%. You need to define a cut-off for %modern.

Authors’ reply: There is no reason to remove Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as both have the share of DFPS with modern methods (% modern) <50%. Kosovo was added to the list.

Lines 51-54, page 7: Suggestion to remove the sentence "Cambodia, Philippines,....modern methods." In Table 1, these countries have a %modern >30%. You need to define a cut-off for %modern.

Authors’ reply: We used 50% as the cutoff for % modern, so the sentence remained but only with Congo and Congo Democratic Republic.

Lines 56-59, page 7: There are 11 countries listed here. Suggestion to remove Belarus, which has 52.5% modern, short term contraception. The other countries are >53%.

Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Lines 1-3, page 8: This sentence should be removed as it does not add to the Results section since these countries have a high %modern.

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 7-10, page 8: Suggestion to remove "highly prevalent" and replace with "common".

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.
Lines 36-37, page 8: "CEEE" should be "CEE".
Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Lines 44-45, page 8: Please remove "extremely". For consistency throughout the manuscript, it is suggested to state only "low coverage" defined as mDFPS below 20%, instead of as "very low" or "extremely low".
Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 49-52, page 8: Suggested rewrite to be consistent with the Abstract: "As shown in Table 3, these subgroups tended to include women who are poor, uneducated/illiterate, young, and living in rural areas."
Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 53-54, page 8: "Animist" should be written as "Animism", which is the religion's name.
Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Lines 53-54, page 8: Please remove "Brazzaville".
Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Lines 58-59, page 8: Guinea-Bissau should be added to the list of countries with other religions.
Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Discussion section:

Lines 22-23, page 9: Please remove "extremely". For consistency throughout the manuscript, it is suggested to state only "low coverage" defined as mDFPS below 20%, instead of as "very low" or "extremely low".
Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.
Lines 27-28, page 9: Please correct the font for "in the" before "youngest age groups" to match the manuscript text font.
Authors’ reply: Corrected in the manuscript.

Lines 19-20, page 10: Please remove "extremely". For consistency throughout the manuscript, it is suggested to state only "low coverage" defined as mDFPS below 20%, instead of as "very low" or "extremely low".
Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 23-25, page 10: Suggested rewrite "With such low coverage at the national level, …"
Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 26-30, page 10: Suggested rewrite: "The subgroups highlighted in Table 3 are not surprising as they tend to include women who are poor, uneducated/illiterate, young, and living in rural areas."
Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 37-39, page 10: Suggested rewrite: "Lack of access to contraception is not one of the most common barriers for use."
Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 48-49, page 10: Please replace "Christianity" with "Animism" as Christianity is not included in the Results section or Table 3, yet Animism is mentioned.
Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 26-27, page 11: Please replace "effectivity" with "effectiveness".
Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.
Conclusion section:

Line 25, page 12: Please remove "extremely". For consistency throughout the manuscript, it is suggested to state only "low" defined as mDFPS below 20%, instead of as "very low" or "extremely low".

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.

Lines 36-47, page 12: These sentences would fit better in the Strengths paragraph in the Discussion section. Please add them to the end of this paragraph after Line 7, page 12.

Authors’ reply: The reviewer’s suggestion was incorporated to the manuscript.