

Author's response to reviews

Title: Socioeconomic factors and low birth weight in Mexico

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Reply to reviewers' comments

(AA Silva) on 12 November 2004.

1. The Abstract and Introduction sections were reviewed with the aim of focusing on the topic and research question. The 2nd paragraph of page 4 was specifically reviewed and changed, as well as the tension between objectives of the paper.
2. The conclusion in the Abstract was changed from being vague to state results.
3. In Methods section the sample size calculation was checked and corrected. On the other hand, we agree with the comment that socioeconomic classification that we used is broad, however there is a lack of accurate information about this topic in our country and we also followed your recommendation of being cautious in our interpretation and in stating this limitation.
4. About the use of three different models, our rationale behind was that the main interest in this study was to show the independent effect of socioeconomic factors in LBW among the known risk factors. We do not think that the age of the mother and her marital status are part of the causal chain between socioeconomic level and LBW. Actually, in the literature there are several studies that identify the need to control for those variables. In the three models presented maternal education was included as well as history of preterm. The strategy was explained in Methods section.
5. About the characteristics of the relationship between socioeconomic factors and LBW, perhaps we did not use the better adjective when we wanted to say that studies have shown different results (references 20, 21, 22, for example) and that there is no agreement in ways to measure socioeconomic status and mechanisms linking it to health outcomes (Bradley R, Socioeconomic status and child development, Annual Reviews Psychology 2002;53:371-399; for example).