

Pushing the conventional envelope of Demography: considerations of stillbirths and their misclassification with neonatal deaths

A seminar by Li Liu

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Room Benvenuti and live Zoom
Department of Statistical Sciences

Conventionally, Demography only counts live births in the denominator of child mortality. However, stillbirths are increasingly recognized and better measured or estimated. Therefore, stillbirths should also be considered in child mortality calculation/estimation. Dr. Liu argues the importance of including stillbirths in the calculation of the total under-five mortality rate (TU5MR). She will discuss and describe various measurement errors associated with neonatal mortality rate (NMR) and stillbirth rate (SBR) with particular attention to a major source of measurement error, which is the misclassification between stillbirths and neonatal deaths. She supports her argument with empirical results from the past and ongoing studies of her work in Malawi, Tanzania, Guinea Bissau, and Bangladesh to study misclassification from multiple angles. These include the extent and variation of the misclassification across settings; one way versus two-way misclassification; factors associated with the misclassification; how the lack of communications between healthcare providers and mothers could affect the misclassification; and how a mobile phone survey and proxy reporting can affect the misclassification. She will demonstrate that the misclassification could lead to non-trivial measurement errors in NMR and SBR and that the two-way misclassifications do not cancel each other out. She suggests the need for additional research to better understand these measurement errors and to reduce them to improve NMR and SBR estimates.



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