Author's response to reviews

Title: Psychological distress among Bam earthquake survivors in Iran: a population-based study

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Author's response to reviews:

Dears in The BioMed Central Editorial Team,

Re: ‘Psychological distress among Bam earthquake survivors in Iran: a population-based study’

Thank you for your e-mail of 18 October. Pleas find the changes that have been made to the manuscript:

1. Additional information about the pre- and post-earthquake population of Bam is provided and this was added to the Method section.
2. An explanation for the stratification is provided. People in the southern region were less affluent and exposed to more damage as compared to those living in the northern part of the city.
3. The number of randomly selected households and camps were reported in the Result section (in the beginning).
4. The important finding of the study was added in the Result section (58% of the survivors indicated that they suffered from severe psychological distress).
5. 'In all 999 individuals' was replaced with 'In total 999 survivors'.
6. 'Secondary educational level' was replaced with 'secondary school education'.
7. Description of the ANOVA in the Result section was revised.
8. We agree that a better way would be to select for inclusion in the regression all variables that correlate with the independent variable at a certain P level, but in our study in the univariate analysis all independent variables were significant and thus all variables were entered into the multiple logistic regression analysis.
9. 'Were significant independent predicting factors for perceived severe psychological symptoms' was replaced with 'were associated with more severe psychological distress'.
10. The statement on 'gender related health inequality' was deleted and the words 'deprived' and 'vulnerable' in relation to women was avoided.
11. For female gender factor additional citation was provided.
12. The importance of the findings of previous studies when interpreting the study results was added to the Discussion.
13. A statement was added to the Discussion to indicate since the study used the GHQ-12 there was no way of knowing which factors related to PTSD and which to depression.
14. The relationship between loss of relatives and psychological distress and possibility of this relationship with severity of trauma-exposure was explained as recommended.
15. The lack of a diagnostic depression scale was acknowledged.
16. A brief section stating recommendations for future research was provided.
17. To our knowledge spelling and grammatical errors were corrected as recommended.

Hope you find the corrections satisfactory.
Yours sincerely
Ali Montazeri