Author’s response to reviews

Title: Food insecurity, school absenteeism and educational attainment of adolescents in southwest Ethiopia: a longitudinal study

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Editorial Team of Nutrition Journal

Subject: Submitting the revised Version of our manuscript

Thank you for sending us the reviewers comments on our manuscript entitled “Food insecurity, school absenteeism and educational attainment of Adolescents in southwest Ethiopia: a longitudinal study [MS#:1711078239481808]”. All the reviewer’s comments were well accepted and accommodated as follows:

General

The methodological issues raised by the reviewer on the presentation of bivariate and multivariate results were clarified. The text of the manuscript was also edited to improve its readability and clarity as commented.

Point by point responses

1. Lines 94-95 were removed based on the comment as they were repetitive and also contradictory to the previous statement.

2. “Severe household food insecurity” was used as previously we observed that adolescents are more affected when more when household food insecurity is severe\(^1\). We assumed that the mild form of household food insecurity may not have significant effect on adolescent food insecurity and probably on subsequent educational attainment due to intra-household buffering of children against food insecurity. The variable was properly named in all the tables and the presentation of the results and this explanation for the use of severe household food insecurity was given in the text of the manuscript on the methodology part (Lines 142-145).

3. Based on the comment
   - Only variables that showed a significant association with school absenteeism in table 1 were shown in table 2. The fact that the parameter estimates are adjusted for variable including place of residence and part of female headed household was indicated in legend of Table 2.
   - Variable names were corrected to be consistent through out the manuscript.
   - More descriptions of bivariate results of school absenteeism and educational attainment were given in the results section (lines 201-206 and lines 233-237).
   - Additional column was added in Table 3, to show the bivariate results of the linear model for predictors of educational attainment.

4. Although school absenteeism was significatltly high among females on stratified bivariate analysis, the effect of gender on school absenteeism disappeared on the

multivariable logic regression model indicating that the effect of gender being mediated by other variable in the model. A stratified analysis showed that significantly larger proportion of girls were from food insecure households, were food insecure themselves and reported illness during the past one month compared to boys. This was explained in the discussion part (Lines 315-322).

5. Table 1 – All the proportions were calculated out of row totals (down rows instead of across columns) as per the comment.
6. Figure 2 - p value was inserted for “food secure”.

Thanks

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