Author's response to reviews

Title: Household Food Insecurity and Mental Distress among Pregnant Women in Southwestern Ethiopia: A cross sectional study design

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editors,

Once again we would like to thank reviewers for their invaluable comments to make the manuscript more meaningful, readable and understandable to our readers. We tried to address all comments (major and minor) and we edited the manuscript accordingly. Herewith it below are our responses to the reviewers comments,

Thank you!

Comment #1: minor essential revisions: editing of the manuscript by a native English speaker is strongly suggested to improve the communication of the research findings and their significance.
Response: we accepted and edited accordingly.

Comment#2: (Minor essential)

a) Lines 109-111: Include citations for the published maternal studies using the SRQ
Response: we include the citation (see line 118-120)

b) The sentences related to ethical clearance, consent, and confidentiality belong in the tools section, not in the data analysis section.
Response: we corrected it accordingly (see line 111-114)

c. Cite Coates et al. in the HFIAS section to clarify where this scoring method originated
Response –corrected accordingly (see line 140-144)

Comment#3. Within the results section, the authors still list that farming was the main occupation despite that only 26% farmed. In addition, it would be better to report the % that owned agricultural land (42.7%) to show that more people owned land available for farming than actually farmed.
Response: edited accordingly (see line 169-171)

a) Table 1 and Table 2 are not easy to read (i.e. the titles of the columns and subtitles should be clearly separated from the results through a line, highlighting, bold, etc.).

b) Table 1 is misaligned in some places (i.e. family monthly income). Income from table 1 would be better placed in Table 2 since it is being reported with socioeconomic and wealth data.
Response –corrected accordingly (see table 1 and 2)

Comments#4
In Table 3: It is confusing to have the reference category vary from the top to the bottom for some of the variables. This reviewer recommends being consistent and having the reference category be listed at the bottom. In addition, the reviewer suggests the label be food insecurity rather than food security for the variable name.

f) Table 3 variables and results are misaligned in many places such as land ownership and previous hx of IPV

Responses-corrected accordingly (see table 3)

Comments#5
Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
Yes, however it is recommended that the second paragraph be split into different paragraphs to differentiate between different topics discussed (ex. Line 212-213, “The magnitude...” should begin a new paragraph, line 228, “This study...”).

Responses-corrected accordingly (see table 3)

Comment#6
a) Lines 32-33 – “A previous study done in Ethiopia also showed maternal distress was associated with child stunting and low birth weight” rather than “previous study done in Ethiopia also showed maternal distress was associated with child stunting, low birth weight
b) Lines 111-112 – “...cutoff scores of...” rather than “...a cutoff score of...”
c) Line 178 – Table instead of Tabel
d) Line 272 – “We chose to...” instead of “We choose...

Response: Response – all are corrected accordingly

Comment#7
References: There is a lack of consistency of referencing style
Response: edited accordingly

Other comments#
• Line 29 – ‘show’ and ‘concern’ should be in the singular
• Line 48 - replace ‘maternal mental depression’ with ‘maternal depression’
• It is not clear whether the authors’ appreciate the degree to which mental distress and disorder are constructs on the same continuum.
• Question (2) does not make sense. Suggest changing to ‘Is there any association between food insecurity and mental distress among pregnant women?’

Response: Response – all are corrected accordingly