Author’s response to reviews

Title: Validation of the Pelvic Organ Prolapse Simple Screening Inventory (POPSSI) in a population of Ethiopian women.

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Author’s response to reviews:

Response to the comments by Laura Elizabeth Dodge

1. “Line 50: Should this be "87.4% sensitivity"?"

Reply: “The sensitivity and specificity of POPSSI for identification of pelvic organ prolapse in the general population were 45.5 and 87.4% respectively”

2. “Lines 21-23: It would likely be useful to the reader to mention here why women with a chief complaint of prolapse were excluded.”

Reply: the main reason why women who were already diagnosed with POP or on treatment for POP were excluded from the study is that we wanted to validate and later use the tool for screening women who may not present complaining prolapse.

3. “Lines 26-27: How were the controls specifically identified? For example, were they the next consecutive patient without prolapse?”

Reply: Women that comes to the gynecologic outpatient clinic who consented for the study and fulfilled the inclusion criteria were asked the four questionnaires and followed by physical examination using the POP-Q system. Those with at least stage one prolapse then became the study and those without POP became the control group.

4. “Line 53: "Rations" should be "ratios."

Reply: The spelling error is corrected on the revised manuscript
5. “Line 54: "Receiver operating curve (ROC)" should be "receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curve."”

Reply: Correction has been made on the revised manuscript

6. “Lines 20-26: It would be helpful to the reader to describe the reasons why these results differ.”

Reply: this difference could be due to the fact that majority of the patients with POP comes with an advanced stage of the disease.

7. “Lines 35-40: As discussed in prior comment #9, these sentences should be reworded to make it clear that the higher sensitivity may be due to increased severity of POP in the Ethiopian population and not simply increased prevalence, which would not affect the sensitivity and specificity of the test.”

Reply: this comment is well taken and will be incorporated in the revised manuscript

8. “Lines 56-58: "The POPSSI can predict POP in approximately 90%" would be better worded as "the POPSSI can detect POP in 90% of affected patients."”

Reply: the rewrite will be incorporated in the revised manuscript

Response to the comments by Douglas Tincello

1. “it is still not clear to me why you excluded women presenting with prolapse as their main concern. Was this because you wanted to use the tool to screen for women who may not present with prolapse, as a way of screening communities for women with disease? Please provide more explanation”

Reply: As you have mentioned it the main reason why women who were already diagnosed with POP or on treatment for POP were excluded from the study is that we wanted to validate and later use the tool for screening women for POP.

2. “data on parity should be presented as median/range not as mean/SD, and compared by Mann Whitney test. Parity is a non-continous variable and so parametric tests are incorrect”

Reply: the comment incorporated in the revised manuscript
3. “you should use the terms "anterior compartment prolapse" and "posterior compartment prolapse" rather than "cystocele" and "rectocele"”

Reply: the terms "cystocele" and "rectocele" have been replaced by "anterior compartment prolapse" and "posterior compartment prolapse" in the revised manuscript.