Reviewer’s report

Title: Antenatal predictors of incident and persistent postnatal depressive symptoms in rural Ethiopia: A population-based prospective study

Version: 0 Date: 11 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Rubee Dev

Reviewer's report:

Overall, an interesting work! Please consider addressing the given below concerns:

Abstract
Results- Percentages here doesn't make sense. 136 and 138 are very close numbers; however, % included in the parentheses are very different. Please confirm these numbers. Or, you could clarify it by paraphrasing a statement so that it clearly indicates how the numbers were calculated. In the last statement, maybe you meant to say "compared" to women with PHQ-9 score of less than five.
What were the other predictors? Did you identify only IPV as a predictor of incident and persistent depression?

Conclusion- Could you be more specific in terms of interventions?

Plain English Summary
There is no difference between abstract and plain English summary except addition of couple of sentences in the starting paragraph. The purpose of plain English summary is not to repeat the abstract but to summarize it in a simple language that could be understood by general population. Also, it might exceed the word count of 250 words.

Background
Page 4, Line 13-26: This is a very long statement that makes it not clear. Please consider breaking it into 2-3 sentences, each with separate topic that you want to convey.
Page 5, Line 15-25: These points could be discussed under the discussion section rather than in the background. Rationale of the study in not very strong.

Methods
Page 6, Line 22-29: Not sure if all of these descriptions are required under the study setting.
Page 7: Was assent form required for the participants < 18 years old?
Page 7, Line 31: Define DSM IV it when using for the first time. It's defined later on in a paragraph.
Page 9, Line 3-5: "A similar cut-off was found to be valid in a community sample of postnatal women in Ghana" not required under the methods.
Line 12-20: Not required as well.
Page 10, Line 18-36: Could be described under the predictors/variables.
Page 10, Line 60: Citations required.

Results
Page 11, Line 29-34: Why was differences in baseline characteristics assessment required, when it was done among the same sample?
Page 11, Line 44: How was this number [136 (15.4%)] calculated?
Also include % for the overall prevalence. In fact, you could start with the overall prevalence and then provide specifics on antenatal/postnatal incident and persistent depression.
Page 12, Line 6: Compared to what?
Page 12, Line 10-18: Present estimates here to be consistent with the above presentation of the results.

Discussion
The first paragraph of the discussion is more like a conclusion of the study.
Page 13, Line 10-13: This is not the main finding of the study. Neither does the study confirms such finding.
Page 13, Line 33-35: Was "even after controlling for perinatal outcomes" included in the results.
Page 13, Line 40: What were the settings of the study?
Page 14, Line 10: Were hypotheses mentioned before the discussion in the manuscript (i.e., under method section)?

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

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5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

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