Reviewer’s report

Title: Factors associated with minimal meal frequency and dietary diversity practices among infant and young children in the predominantly agrarian society of Bale zone, at southeast Ethiopia: A community based cross sectional study

Version: 0 Date: 20 Feb 2017

Reviewer: Shiva Bhandari

Reviewer's report:

This paper contributes data on the prevalence rates of minimal meal frequency and dietary diversity and associated factors with the indicators in Southeast Ethiopia. The following are suggestions to improve the manuscript:

Major compulsory revisions

1. In abstract, instead of "acceptable dietary diversity scores" please use the standard term "minimum dietary diversity". Please be consistent with the term throughout the text.

2. In results (abstract), please write CI in percentage since you are reporting a prevalence in percent. In addition, please mention the 95% CI of the odds ratio.

3. "……kebeles (smallest administrative units) in". In this sentence, is something missing?

4. "…..single population proportion formula (P)". What does "P" mean?

5. "…the result for S1". What are S1 and S2?

6. Please define "eligible subject" in your study.

7. "….determined by preliminary survey…". Which survey? Did the authors conducted this survey?
8. "After a proportional allocation to each kebele, the systematic sampling technique was employed." More clarification is needed.

9. Please provide a reference based on what you developed your two indicators. I think you are using WHO guidelines, which can be accessed at: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/43895/1/9789241596664_eng.pdf

10. "Accordingly, children who consumed ≤ 3 food groups and ≥ 4 food groups were classified as having poor…". I don't understand what you want to say. Minimum dietary diversity is itself an indicator that means proportion of children 6-23 months of age who receive foods from 4 or more food groups. I request the authors to stick with this definition.

11. "Minimal meal frequency mean is…". This sentence needs to be corrected. You can write "In minimum meal frequency indicator, 'minimum' is defined as ….".

12. "Timely initiation of complementary feeding" and "Minimum acceptable diet", are you using these in this paper? If not, please remove.

13. It looks more lucid if you use a different sub-heading like "Operational definitions" and define all the terms/indicators you've used in this study.

14. I'd not use the term "living standard" based on what you've calculated. Instead, I'd call it socio-economic status or simply wealth quintile. In addition, it's better to mention what were the assets that the authors used to calculate the composite indicator.

15. In table 1, instead of "not read and write", "illiterate" sounds appropriate.

16. In figure 1, it looks better if you just show the percent of consuming foods.

17. In table 3, please check the number of "Frequency of antenatal care visit". In addition, it is better to write in text about the women who had >=4 times of ANC visit rather than just saying "More than ninety percent of children mothers had at least one history....". Similar is the case for PNC.
18. While mentioning limitations, I think it is better to remove the second one as you haven't looked into initiation of complementary feeding. In addition, you can add a limitation, study being not representative of the whole nation.

19. This manuscript needs extensive language corrections (preferably by a native English speaker) before being published.

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:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.
I declare that I have no competing interests.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal.