**Prevalence of food taboo during pregnancy in Ethiopia: A systematic review and meta-analysis**

***First Reviewer’s Comments***

**For author and editor**

This is an interesting meta-analysis examining the prevalence of food taboos during pregnancy in Ethiopia. However, there are several issues that should be addressed.

1. Please proofread the entire manuscript carefully. There are numerous spelling and grammatical errors throughout the manuscript. For example, in the first sentence of the Abstract, it should say “which is required.”
2. Please define “food taboo” in the first paragraph of the Introduction for people who are unfamiliar with the term.
3. Please explain and elaborate on your assertion that “(100%) of the studies were in good quality which is a low risk of bias” (page 8). All the included studies were either cross-sectional or case-control, which have a relatively high risk of bias.
4. On page 6, the authors mention “different outcome measurements across studies.” Can the authors elaborate on how the outcomes measured were different? If the outcome measurements are very different, please include them as a new column in Table 1.
5. In Table 1, the title for the fourth column should say “Region of Ethiopia.”
6. Aside from region, did the authors notice other factors that may account for the large heterogeneity of the studies (such as age of the participants)?
7. In the Discussion, it would be great to discuss more about future directions for research.

**Prevalence of food taboo during pregnancy in Ethiopia: A systematic review and meta-analysis**

### *Second Reviewer’s Comments*

#### For author and editor

In this article, the authors conducted a meta-analysis to determine the prevalence of food taboos during pregnancy in Ethiopia. They identified nine relevant studies and found a pooled prevalence of 38.50% for food taboos among pregnant women in Ethiopia. They also found significant heterogeneity among the studies, with the highest prevalence of food taboos seen in the Somali region and the lowest in the Tigray region. The authors recommend integrating nutrition education with antenatal care programs to prevent nutritional deficiencies associated with food taboos in all regions of Ethiopia.

A few recommendations/comments can be found below:

1. I would ask the authors to provide a bit more of discussion about why food taboo is more attached to African culture than any other place in the world. I am aware that some possible contributing factors include cultural traditions, religious beliefs, and environmental or economic conditions. Regarding cultural traditions and practices, in some African societies, certain foods may be considered sacred or have special cultural significance and therefore be restricted or avoided. Additionally, food taboo may be passed down through generations as a way to preserve cultural traditions and identity. Then, in terms of religious beliefs, some religions may prohibit the consumption of certain types of animals or foods, or prescribe specific dietary rules. Lastly, regarding environmental and economic conditions, certain foods may be scarce or difficult to obtain in certain regions, leading to their avoidance or restriction. When discussing these in more detail, add references.
2. Most affirmatory claims need references. For instance, Ethiopia is the second largest populous country in Africa and has more than eighty ethnic groups that had different cultural beliefs and values needs a reference (despite of being known facts).
3. Figure 4 lacks the label in the x axis, and if possible, include the image with higher resolution and a white background, more suitable for publications.