Reviewer's report

Title: The Mother-Newborn Skin-to-Skin Contact Questionnaire (MSSCQ): development and psychometric evaluation

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Reviewer: Malin Soederberg

Reviewer's report:

This paper reports on the development and psychometric evaluation of a new instrument, The Mother-Newborn Skin-to-Skin Contact Questionnaire (MSSCQ): development and psychometric evaluation.

Major Compulsory Revisions

The aim of this study needs to be clarified, please see comment 3 below.

Please see comments and questions below for suggested revisions and questions.

Abstract:

Title
1. The title is short and do not convey the study group.

Background
2. The background in the abstract is very short please add some more information before the aim.

Main manuscript:

Background
3. The aim of this study is unclear. In the abstract the authors states that the aim is "to develop and psychometric evaluate an instrument for measuring factors influencing mother-newborn skin-to-skin contact (MSSCQ) based on the PRECEDE-PROCEED model"

Further in the background the aim is not defined, the authors state "it is crucial to modify the attitude and behaviours of midwives as the first caregiver of children. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the factors associated with skin contact and then design and implement educational courses for midwives to promote mother-newborn skin contact immediately after birth as a common procedure in hospitals" and later in the background, "the current study was conducted to develop and evaluate the reliability and
psychometric properties of an instrument for assessing factors associated with mother-neonatal skin contact immediately after birth based on the Precede-Proceed model

And in the beginning of the discussion, "This study was reported the stages of designing and developing an instrument for assessing the factors associated with mother-newborn skin-to-skin immediately after birth based on the Precede-Proceed model"

What is the research question? Do the aim of this study focus "factors influencing skin-to-skin contact (SSC)" or "factors associated with SSC"? This needs to be clarified. Why use the word "factors" if it is about attitudes and behaviours? It is not clear what factors are of interest.

4. The background presents important benefits of SSC, which is interesting but can be shortened and completed with information about the context of Iranian society, midwifery education and midwifery care. This information is necessary for the international reader to be able to understand and also to evaluate the validity and transferability of this study.

For example:
What does ‘the normal route’ mean?
Further the author’s write that it is crucial to modify the attitude and behaviours of midwives. What are these attitudes and behaviours?
And concerning skin-to-skin contact, 'it has not been adopted as a universal post-delivery care for healthy term children', I wonder, in which context?

In page 4, line 4 the authors write: 'it is crucial to modify the attitude and behaviours of midwives... Therefore it is necessary to identify the factors associated with skin contact and then design and implement educational courses.... For this purpose it is required to use instruments'

Please describe the caring environment today for the reader to be able to understand why and how midwives attitudes and behaviours need to be modified. What are 'the local cultures' (p. 4, line 9)
The reader needs to understand in what context this instrument was developed? (see also comment 4)

Please consider to rewrite the background and make the aim consistent, and place it in a separate paragraph at the end of the background.

Language
6. The manuscript needs to be proofread. The authors are clearly proficient in English, but there a few errors in the paper.

For instance, double wording (line 3 p 6), grammar (line 1, p 9) "were participated", spelling (line 9, p 10) "Finger" should be "Figure" etc

Be aware to use words consistent, see comment 3 and 9, another example is how you use "skin-to-skin contact" which is sometimes written as 'skin contact',
"mother-newborn" or "mother-neonatal" is another example.

Method
7. On page 5 in the beginning of the paragraph Item generation the authors write that FGD were held with midwives to elucidate what issues are important in mother-newborn skin-to-skin contacts, later in the results Table 2 the factors 1, 3, 5 and 8 is very similar to known and presented (in background) benefits which makes me wonder about the focus-group-arrangement (FGD) and again, the research question and the context.

More information about the focus-group-discussions is needed, which questions was used? What information did the midwives recieve? The authors writes "FGD was used to elucidate what issues are important in mother-newborn skin-to-skin contacts in order to generate an item pool for developing a questionnaire on the topic” and “the midwives was informed about the aim of the study”.

Analysis and results
8. In the EFA (p.7) the limit for factor loadings was set to equal or greater than 0.3. But in table 3 and 4 a few presented factors are <3. See also factor 13 statement 2, it needs correction. It is good that both face-validity and content validity was used but which language was used? Has a forward/backward translation been done? Which measuring scale was used in "the main study” (p.7)?

Discussion
9. Make sure that the words factors and structure are used consistent, for example see line 8, p 11.

Limitations of the study and/or the method is not discussed.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests