Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prediction of breast self-examination in a sample of Iranian women: An application of the Health Belief Model

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
Dear Natalie Pafitis MSc
Senior Scientific Editor of BMC-series Journals

Thank you very much for letting us know the additional reviewers’ comments. We have revised our manuscript in light of the reviewers' comments and made any required changes to the format of the paper. Furthermore, there is a covering letter with a point-by-point description of the changes accompanied by the paper. I hope the reviewers find them satisfactory.

I wish all the best for you

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Reviewer's report and responses:

Title: Prediction of breast self-examination in a sample of Iranian women: Application of the Health Belief Model

Version: 4 Date: 7 September 2009

Reviewer: Paul Norman

The authors have made a number of changes to their manuscript. In the main, I am happy with these changes. Nonetheless, I noted a number of minor points for the authors to attend to.

Title
1. The second half of the title should read “An application of…”
   • This was corrected.

Abstract
2. Line 1 should read “Iranian women, many of whom live..”
   • This was done as recommended.

3. Aim should read “…examined constructs… …as predictors of…”
   • This was done.

4. The first sentence of the results could be deleted.
5. There’s no need to report the information on marital status or education level.
   • This information was deleted.

6. Delete “Again”.
   • This word was corrected.

7. Also need to report that perceived barriers were lower among those who had performed BSE.
   • This information was reported.

8. Should read “…perceived fewer barriers… … and had higher self-efficacy…”.
   • This was corrected.

Background.

9. Paragraph 2, line 3 should read “…it is likely that…”
   • This was changed.

10. Paragraph 3, line 6 should read “were” rather than “was”.
    • This was corrected.

11. Paragraph 6. The last sentence could be deleted.
    • This sentence was deleted.

12. Paragraph 7, line 1 should read “To the best of our knowledge, there is no previous research which that applied the HBM to……

    • This part was revised.

Methods

13. Measures, paragraph 3. The meaning of the final sentence is unclear.

    • This sentence was revised. Originally, this statement was added to this part of method as recommended by one of reviewers.
14. Measures, paragraph 4. The meaning of “in relation to an established instrument” in the final sentence is unclear.

- This was corrected.

*15. Data analysis. The classification of the sample into the two groups for analysis could be reported more clearly. For example, it would be useful to report how many women reported having performed BSE and then report how many performed it at least monthly. It would then need to be stated that for analysis, then sample was split according to whether or not they had performed BSE at all.

- It was reported as recommended.

16. Data analysis. “n” rather than “N” should be used when reporting the numbers in each group.

- This was done.

Results.

17. Use lower case “p” throughout.

- This was done.

*18. It is not clear why age, education and history of breast problems were entered into the logistic regression analysis given that their non-significant associations with BSE. Moreover, it is possible that the marginally significant (p=.08) for BSE benefits might become significant without the inclusion of these variables.

- Age, education and history of breast problems removed from logistic regression analysis. The changes were shown in table 4.

Discussion.

19. Paragraphs 2 and 3 repeats material reported in the background. It would be better to re-order the discussion so that the current results are reported first and then related to previous research.

- These paragraphs were re-ordered.
20. Paragraph 4, line 2 – use “fewer barriers” rather than “less barriers”.
   • This was done.

21. Paragraph 4, line 3-4 – it’s not clear what “validate the respective conceptual structures of the HBM” means.
   • This sentence was revised.

22. Paragraph 5. Perceived benefits might be predictive of BSE (see point 18). Nonetheless, it should be noted that perceived benefits were associated with BSE in the univariate analyses.
   • As mentioned in point 18 and table 4, after removing age, education and history of breast problems from logistic regression analysis, perceived benefits was not predictive of BSE. However, perceived benefits were associated with BSE in the univariate analyses. This sentence was revised in paragraph 5 of discussion.

23. Paragraph 6 should be deleted as the CHBMS scales had good internal reliability in the current study.
   • This paragraph was deleted.

Responses to reviewer's report

Title: Prediction of breast self-examination in a sample of Iranian women: Application of the Health Belief Model

Version: 4 Date: 20 August 2009

Reviewer: Nursen O Nahcivan

The authors have made nearly all of the changes to their manuscript in response to my comments. The manuscript is up to the standard of publication for the BMC Women's Health after the changes made in two points as detailed below:
Minor Essential Revisions

1. The word "randomly" should be removed from the methods section in the Abstract.
   • It was removed.

2. One of the result of the present study that the authors reported in Discussion: Page 10, second paragraph, was the rate of woman performed BSE on the regular basis (7.1%). This data should be reported in "Results" section.
   • It was done as recommended.