Reviewer's report

Title: Health Belief Mode constructs as factors associated with Breast Self-Examination behavior in a sample of women in Bandar Abass, Iran

Version: 3 Date: 8 May 2009

Reviewer: Paul Norman

Reviewer's report:

Overall Comments:

The manuscript reports an interesting study applying the Health Belief Model (HBM) to the prediction of breast self-examination among Iranian women. The manuscript is likely to make a positive contribution to the literature given that are no other HBM studies on BSE in Iran. In addition, the relatively large sample and the use of Champion’s HBM scale are positive features of the study.

The authors have made a number of changes to their manuscript in response to my comments on the original submission. These have addressed most of my concerns. However, there are still a few points that still require attention as detailed below.

Major revisions:

The manuscript would benefit from further copy-editing. There were too many minor grammatical errors for me to list.

The description of the BSE measures still lacks detail – this needs to be reported more precisely given that BSE performance is the dependent variable.

Were there any differences in BSE performance according to age, education and history of breast problems? These results need to be reported in the text.

It’s not clear why age and education are included in the logistic regression analysis but history of breast problems isn’t. One option would be to only include those that are significantly associated with BSE performance or, alternatively, to include all three variables.

Minor revisions:

The title doesn’t appear to have been changed. It would be better as “An application of health belief model to the prediction of breast self-examination in Iranian women” or “Breast self-examination in Iranian women: An application of health belief model”

There’s no need to provide such detailed information on the demographic profile of the women in the abstract.
The information on the incidence of breast cancer in Iran in the introduction could be reported more succinctly. In addition, further information on applications of the HBM to the prediction of BSE could be provided. For example, which HBM constructs are most strongly or most consistently associated with BSE performance?

The method would benefit from the use of more sub-headings to structure the material.

It is not immediately clear from the text on page 5 that the comparison reported in Table 2 is between BSE performers (regular and irregular) and non-performers (never). This needs to be stated more clearly.

The reporting/interpretation of the odds ratios in the text could be clearer.

Table 1. The meaning of the second table note is very unclear.

Table 2, 3 and 4. p = .000 should be reported as p < .001.

Discussion.

Page 9, paragraph 3. The first sentence is technically incorrect as the BSE group consisted of regular and irregular BSE performers.

Page 10, final paragraph before the conclusion. There doesn’t appear to be a strong case for suggesting the use of factor analysis given that the scales were found to be reliable in the present study.

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

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests