Reviewer's report

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

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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…”

Abstract

2. Line 1 should read “Iranian women, many of whom live..”
3. Aim should read “…examined constructs… …as predictors of…”
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.
6. Delete “Again”.
7. Also need to report that perceived barriers were lower among those who had performed BSE.
8. Should read “…perceived fewer barriers… … and had higher self-efficacy…”

Background.

9. Paragraph 2, line 3 should read “…it is likely that…”
10. Paragraph 3, line 6 should read “were” rather than “was”.
11. Paragraph 6. The last sentence could be 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…”. The rest of the paragraph could be phrased better.

Methods

13. Measures, paragraph 3. The meaning of the final sentence is unclear.
14. Measures, paragraph 4. The meaning of “in relation to an established instrument” in the final sentence is unclear.

*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.

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

Results.

17. Use lower case “p” throughout.

*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.

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.

20. Paragraph 4, line 2 – use “fewer barriers” rather than “less barriers”.

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

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.

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

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

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

**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