Reviewer’s report

Title: Adaptation and Psychometric Evaluation of the Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale to Assess Exclusive Breastfeeding

Version: 0 Date: 24 Sep 2018

Reviewer: Sonia Semenic

Reviewer's report:

Thank for this very well-written, comprehensive description of the development and psychometric testing of the an adapted version of Dennis' Breastfeeding Self-efficacy scale for exclusive breastfeeding. I have only a few minor comments for the authors to correct or address in the manuscript prior to publication:

1) You may want to update your reference for the global rate of exclusive breastfeeding on line 93. The most recent data from the WHO's GLOBAL BREASTFEEDING SCORECARD, 2017 -Tracking Progress for Breastfeeding Policies and Programmes states: "The overall rate of exclusive breastfeeding for infants under six months of age is 40%. Only 23 countries have achieved at least 60% of infants less than six months being exclusively breastfed" (p. 8).

2) P. 4, Line 124 - remove the "and" before point 4.

3) P. 14, line 347 - You report the Cronbach's alphas for the EBFSS score and cite Table 1, but these numbers are not in the table - perhaps you can add a column for these?

4) P. 15, lines 360-364 - the reporting of the findings is a little confusing here, as the reported finding don't match up precisely with the data in Table 2. For example, from the table, the mean range for the items is 3.09-3.73, not 3.1 to 3.8 (3.73 rounds down to 3.7). Perhaps report the mean range of the items and the medians in separate sentences, as the statement "except for challenging task and BF every feeding" on line 361 appears to be referring to their median.
5) P. 18, Line 379 and Table 3 - the text states that 2 items were dropped because of factor loadings lower < .30 (Challenging task and Manage F) - please indicate if you were you referring to lower factor loadings in the one-factor or two factor model here. For example, "challenging tasks" had a factor loading of .39 in the one-factor model - does that mean you were referring to a cut-off of .30 for the TWO-factor model? if so, its not clear then why Enough Milk was retained with a two-factor loading of .29? Is this a typo?

6) Table 5 - Can you clarify whether the questionnaire, when administered, indicated whether some of the statements only refer to the first six 6 months of life? For example, the items EBF milk, Continue EBF and EBF liquid only pertain to the first 6 months, beyond which infants should be receiving additional nutrients. Is it possible that participants scored lower on these items in recognition that beyond 6 months they would need to give their infants more than just breastmilk? Or were they aware when responding that these items only referred to the first 6 months of breastfeeding?

7) P. 22. Line 435 - The statement "These values were consistently above the published satisfactory (0.70) and preferred (0.80) thresholds for scale reliability" is not accurate as the 3-month Cronbach alphas reported in Table 6 are both below .80 (ie, .7677 and .7903)

Results in general - although it may be beyond the scope of this paper, it would have been interesting to know whether HIV+ women scored differently on the items (could this have been done as another test of know group comparison? Ie, is there theoretical reason to predict that HIV+ mothers would have lower EBFSS scores, due to their compromised health status?)

P. 24, Line 521 - please add that the scale can assess PERCEIVED capacity to exclusively breastfeed, as the scale measure perceptions of BSE, not actual behaviors

P. 26 - Lies 527-529 - This sentence needs some clarification - its not clear how the scale can be used to "assess programs and enhance the development of policy initiatives aimed at increasing exclusive breastfeeding" - may need to specify that the scale and be administered to participants of during the evaluation or programs and policy initiatives aimed at increasing exclusive breastfeeding...
P. 26 Line 543 - its not clear to me why this scale would be specific to women "where breastfeeding is common but rates of exclusive breastfeeding are low" - I think this scale may have applications to all breastfeeding populations!

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
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