Reviewer's report

Title: The effect of midwifery led counseling based on Gamble's approach on childbirth fear and self-efficacy in nulligravida women

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Reviewer's report:

The manuscript titled "Effectiveness of a Psycho-Education Intervention by Midwives (BILIEF protocol) on childbirth fear and childbirth self-efficacy in fearful first time pregnant women: a randomized controlled trial" is an important study. However, some correction/elaboration needs to be considered to improve the manuscript.

In the title, it would be good to avoid the name of the protocol.

In the Abstract (background section), please add a little bit of information on the background of this study. Currently, the authors just stated the objective of the study. The authors have mentioned the name of the protocol is BILIEF which is wrong. The correct name of the protocol is BELIEF. Correct the protocol name all over the manuscript and also elaborate the word BELIEF. In the Methods section (Abstract), it important to include information about the place (e.g. government hospital, private hospital etc.) from where the pregnant women were recruited.

Please be consistent in using words all over the manuscript. For example, sometimes the authors mention post-test but sometimes posttest. Again, sometimes they use psycho-education but sometimes psychoeducation.

In page 7, the authors mentioned power=%80. Please make the necessary correction of all typos like this all over the manuscript.

It is not clear why the authors incorporate the formula (page 7). If they would like to include the formula, it needs to be linked with the text.

It looks the section 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 have a scope to present more concisely.

In page 11, the authors have mentioned that participants' mean age for intervention group is 26.27±4.48 and for the control group, the mean is 254.87±4.58 which does not look correct. Please make the necessary correction and also, include information related to age (both participants' and husband) in Table 1.

The authors have written in their result section (page 11), "... Similarly, they were not different regarding pre-test scores of Childbirth Self-Efficacy Inventory (t (66) = 1.37, p = 0.17), and childbirth preference (x2 (2, N = 68) = 0.000, p = .99) (Table 1). However, the intervention group got higher scores on Wijma Delivery Expectancy/Experience Questionnaire-A (t (66) =2.33, p = 0.02) than control group at pre-test assessment (Table 1)." However, this information is not available in Table 1. Please make the necessary correction.
Please present only the p-value both in the result section and in Tables. It would be nice if the authors delete all other values (e.g. t, chi, F value etc.).

In page 12, they could present the information like all the p-values>0.05.

The authors labelling three sections - "Intervention effects on childbirth fear", "Intervention effects on childbirth self-efficacy" and "Intervention effects on childbirth preference" as section 3.2. Please make the necessary correction. Again, section 3.1 is missing.

In page 13, the authors reported, "... After intervention, more women in the intervention group (n = 29 (82.85%)) reported that they preferred to give birth via normal vaginal birth than women in the control group (n = 19 (57.57%)), (x2 (2, N = 68) = 7.63, p = 0.02). Thus, the BILIEF intervention was effective in increasing desire of fearful pregnant women toward normal vaginal birth (Table 2)." However, this information is not available in Table 2.

It is not clear how do the authors analyze their outcomes in Table 2? I think the difference in differences technique could be a good option to present the outcomes in Table 2. Changes in mean scores for intervention and control groups for the outcomes WDEQ-A and CBSEI and then the differences of mean changes will demonstrate the findings of this study more clearly. Please make the necessary correction in Table 2 and also re-write the findings in the Result section.

Overall, this study is not generalizable to all other settings. This is because the health systems are poor in many developing countries and have a serious shortage of health workforce. I think the authors should include this information in their discussion.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**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?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.
I recommend additional statistical review

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Needs some language corrections before being published

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