Author's response to reviews

Title: Perceptions of Iranian women with polycystic ovary syndrome about health related quality of life issues: A qualitative study

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Dear Editor

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Perceptions of Iranian women with polycystic ovary syndrome about health-related quality of life issues: A qualitative study

Thank you for your e-mail. Please find the following point-by-point responses as requested:

1. There are unsupported assertions in the Introduction e.g. "Countless visits to doctor, numerous tests and the agony and uncertainty of 53 waiting for test results become a painful reality for those individuals". All assertions need to be supported with appropriate references.

Thank you very much for your recommend. However, this sentient said by the first author by previous experience in clinic and published her article. Based your valuable comment, we did not find any reference for this sentence and therefore we removed this.


2. The first sub-section of the Methods, headed Study Design does not refer to design, rather it describes a method of data analysis. There needs to be an accurate description of the study design here, including a rationale for why it is the appropriate method to address the research question.

We revised this section as below. The rationale for this research design is explained in introduction:

The complexity involved in the illness process and the aspects related to the symptoms of this syndrome signify the importance of the qualitative studies that incorporate individuals’ perspective into their socio-cultural contexts. Despite increased attention to the syndrome, psychological aspects syndrome in previous literature, there is a paucity of research aimed at investigating this topic qualitatively from perspective of the women with PCOS. In the light of the burden that this diagnosis may have on one’s life and given the fact of relatively high prevalence of this disease in Iran, the examination of HRQOL outcomes should be recognized as a priority in PCOS research. However, in Iran, where women play the most important role in their families on one hand and the diagnosis and treatment of PCOS have significant physical and psychosocial impacts on patients, families and friends on the other, it is to say that the studies examining the HRQOL outcome are rare. The present study attempts to provide a deep understanding of the HRQOL in patients with PCOS.

Study design
This was a qualitative study to explore the various effects PCOS has had on the physical, social, and psychological/emotional aspects of the lives of Iranian women.

3. Participation was limited to married women. The condition of interest PCOS is experienced by women who are married and unmarried. This represents a major limitation in the study which needs to be justified in the Methods and acknowledged and discussed in the Discussion.

Based on your comment, we added the below sentence in limitation section and point out the married women as inclusion criteria in methods.

Moreover, Iranian unmarried women generally avoid visiting doctor for cultural issues. For the same reason as well as illegitimacy of sexual relation and having prior to marriage children, the population of present study compromised married PCOS women. Therefore, the results of the present study have to be interpreted with some caution.

We hope you find the revisions satisfactory.

Yours sincerely

Fatemeh Bazarganipour