Author’s response to reviews

Title: Experiences with pain of early medical abortion: qualitative results from Nepal, South Africa, and Vietnam

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Point by point responses:

Editor’s Comments:

1) Background, second paragraph, fourth statement (page 4, line 73): Rephrase to read: “There is therefore a clear need …”
   • Revised.

2) Methods, second paragraph, second last statement (page 6, line 120): The statement is hanging. It could be better rephrased to something like, “Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before conducting the interviews.”
   • Revised.

3) Results, second paragraph, second last statement (page 10, lines 199-200): Rephrase the last part of the statement to read: “…ranging from 6.1 in Nepal to 6.7 in Vietnam and 7.1 in South
Africa.” In other words, a range should progressively include numbers from the lowest to the highest.

• Revised.

4) Medical abortion pain relative to other pains:

• Sixth paragraph, fourth statement (page 14, line 304): I guess the quote from the participant was “…my psyche was much at ease…” since it does not make sense the way it is.

• Revised.

• Last paragraph (page 15, lines 318-319): It is not clear what is meant by the phrase “that her physician was following expectantly”.

• We clarified that needed “to have multiple follow-up visits (although she did not have additional treatment).”

5) Emotional experiences, last paragraph, third statement (page 20, line 427): My guess is that the quote from the participant here should read, “…to overcome it easily…” since it does not make sense the way it is.

• Revised.

6) Discussion:

• Fourth paragraph, second statement (page 21, line 456): Rephrase to read: “In a randomized controlled trial involving 101 women …” Otherwise as currently stated, the statement reads like the 101 women were on trial by the justice system”.

• Revised.

• Last paragraph, third statement (page 23, lines 489-490): Rephrase to read: “Our study has some limitations.”

• Revised.

7) References (page 30, line 653): Format the initials of the first author appropriately i.e. there should be no space between the first initial and the subsequent ones.
8) Table 1 (page 31):

- Rephrase the title to read: “Characteristics of study participants”. That should suffice.
- Revised.
- It is interesting that in Nepal, 36% of the participants were in school but only 14% considered themselves as students (under occupation). So, what could be the remaining 22% who were in school be doing there if they were not students?
- We have changed the label to “primary occupation,” since the occupation question was not a select all question and the question about “being in school” was asked separately from the occupation question. So, those who were “in school” but did not check “student” were likely both students and professionals/housewives but identified first as a professional or housewife rather than as a student. When looking at the data, of the five in Nepal who marked “in school”, two of these selected “professional”, one selected “housewife”, and two selected “student” on the occupation question. If you would like us to add a footnote to the table to clarify this, we can.

9) Table 2 (page 32):

- Medical abortion pain relative to other pains: Insert “participants” between “Most” and “considered” (third last point). The same applies to second last point i.e. insert “participants” between “Most” and “who”.
- Revised.
- Emotional experiences (second point): Insert “participants” between “Most” and “thought”.
- Revised.