Author’s response to reviews

Title: A family-oriented antenatal education program to improve birth preparedness and maternal-infant birth outcomes: A cross sectional evaluation study

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Responses to the editor’s comments:

Editor: I have reviewed the above titled manuscript and noted that it has a message to pass but the study methodology is not elaborately written and therefore not making it clear to the reader on how the study was done.

Response: After the important comments received, we carefully looked at the study and the data again and decided to report the study as cross-sectional evaluation study as the analysis include the data of the second phase only.

Also, we thought the explanation of the study design could be confusing and revised the explanation on p.7 as follows.

For the second phase, the participants in the first phase (the intervention group) were followed after one year. The research team visited the same villages of the first phase and requested the village leaders to announce the present research to both participants of the antenatal education program (the first phase) and those who did not participate in the first phase of the study.

Editor: Secondly, although the sample size was calculated to be 50 and 144 for intervention and control arms, the results in table 1 has some cells which are less than 10. This would necessitate the authors to use non-parametric tests or other relevant statistical methods to confirm the significance levels obtained in the analysis.
Response: The analysis of Table 1 with cells less than 10 (marital status, educational level, and occupation) was Pearson’s chi-square test as the data were nominal. It was indicated in the “statistical analysis” section on p. 13 as “Pearson’s chi-square test was used for other nominal background data.” To make it clear, we added the description in the results section on p. 14.

Table 1 shows the sociodemographic variables of both groups. There were no significant differences in the age, gender, marital status, number of children, educational level, occupation, daily expense, and household asset ownership between the two groups based on Person’s chi-square test.

Editor: Thirdly, the tables 2-4 do not have the n (number) for the cases for the intervention and controls in addition to the OR data shown per question in the questionnaire. How many respondents were there for each of the question for intervention and control.

Response: We included the data of those who answered all the key questions; we exclude the data of participants who did not respond the items on the tables 2-4. Therefore, the n (n = 194) applies to all the items.

In the “statistical analysis” section on p.13, we wrote, “Those who missed values were excluded from the final analysis, so there was no missing data.”

Editor: It is not clear on how the 144 were assigned to the control arm and 50 to intervention if there were two arms in the study. Were there more than two controls and one intervention?.

Response: As this study is cross sectional survey with convenient samples, there was no random assignment. All villagers who came to the recruitment for the second phase and agreed to participate in the study were included, and there were only 50 who came back to the study and provide sufficient data although we aimed to follow up more. Because of the time constraint of the study, we were not able to follow up other participants in the intervention group.