Reviewer's report

Title: Psychological Quality of Life and its association with academic employability skills among newly-registered students from three European faculties

Version: 1 Date: 8 March 2011

Reviewer: Björn Paxling

Reviewer's report:

I have previously reviewed the manuscript then titled "Psychological Quality of Life among newly-registered students from three European faculties: out of balance with academic employability skills?", and have now been asked to review a revision of said manuscript, now titled "Psychological Quality of Life and its association with academic employability skills among newly-registered students from three European faculties". I have thoroughly read the revised manuscript, as well as the authors replies to my and the other peer reviewers comments. My general impression is that the authors have invested a significant amount of time and work into rewriting the MS, both the introduction and the discussion have been extensively rewritten which has really improved the quality of the MS! I find that the authors have taken time to read all my and the other reviewers comments with great care and have implemented suggestions as well as come up with own solutions to problematic parts of the previous paper, and in my impression the resulting MS is drastically better than the previous one!

I have a couple of suggestions for revisions of the revised manuscript that I hope might help improve it further. None of my comments are major compulsory revisions, and I do recommend that the paper will be published after a minor revision.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. In the Abstract, results section, I believe a word or two is missing at the end of this sentence: "Students in F2 (Belgium) had the worst QoL-psychological."

2. Methodology/Ethics, page 4, forth row: and extra [ is inserted right before the quote, please delete this.

3. Methodology/Data collection/c), page 5 row 1-2: The importance of going to university was assessed on a four-point scale from "very important" to "an important step" according to the text, which puzzles me. Is "an important step" supposed to be the least important choice of answer for this question? When I look at Table 1, results from the question about "Importance of going to university" is divided into three categories: Very important, Important and Not important, which adds to my confusion.

4. Results/page 6, second paragraph: The numbers reported in this paragraph
are also reported in Table 2, but the numbers differ between the text and the table. I suppose the reason for this is that the results were recalculated to be adjusted for sex and age in order to find a significance (which is perfectly alright), but the numbers in the text ought to be the same as in the table, or at least the reason for this not being the case.

5. Discussion/Page 8, third paragraph: I believe there are several cases of confusion about the correct reference in this paragraph. In the reference list, ref [47] concerns the WHOQOL-BREF and the relationship between electronic and paper/pencil-version, but in the text reference [46] is instead used to prove this point. Please recheck that the references are correct.

6. Table 1: I am unsure if the p-value column adds anything to this table on socio-demographics, could it perhaps be omitted?

7. Table 3: In the upper section of this table, the relationships between QoL-psychological and socio-demographic characteristics are presented by Mean and SE. I don’t quite understand how these Means show the relationship (as is clearly shown in the lower part of the Table with correlation coefficients instead). What does Means stand for in this context, and why wasn’t correlation coefficients used throughout the entire table?

Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

8. Background, page 3, first paragraph, second sentence: Please elaborate what the abbreviation OECD is short for.

9. Background, page 3, second paragraph, first sentence: This sentence sounds grammatically strange both in the beginning and at the end, I have italicized the parts I think needs reformulation: "People at university are exposed [...] adulthood and issues to do with being a student."

10. Methodology/Data collected/b), page 5, 6th row: The german and Romanian versions of AES was translated and back-translated by experts, but there needs a short elaboration regarding which kinds of experts these were (language-experts, experts in employability, or something else?)

11. Discussion/page 7, second paragraph, last sentence: It is here stated that results may be influenced by "difficult global economic circumstances, particularly for the Romanians", and I’d like to see one or several references here. When this paper is read many years in the future, it may not be so clear that the world was under difficult economic circumstances, and readers that want to read more about this should have a reference to follow. This is particularly important when a specific country is pointed out as being more affected than others, as is the case with Romania in this sentence.

12. Discussion/Page 7, third paragraph, third sentence to last: "It was observed that social sciences graduates who had worked for at least two years attained higher levels.” Please elaborate briefly which kind of higher levels the social sciences graduates attained (risk of misinterpretation if not more clearly defined).
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests