Reviewer's report

Title: Interreality for the Management and Training of Psychological Stress: Study Protocol for a Randomized controlled trial

Version: 2 Date: 24 April 2013

Reviewer: Pedro Gamito

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Major Compulsory Revisions
1- On the last paragraph of page 4, I would use another word for “Objective”, as biosensors and behavioural analyses, although being more objective than self-reports, rely on inferential procedures.

2- Page 4, paragraph 4: please delete the first is on the following sentence “The aim of this is proposal is to create” and a space between in and vivo is required on the sentence “current real-life (invivo) limitations of psychological”

3- Page 6, paragraph 3: are you expecting that some of the teachers and nurses to be mental retarded? Do you mean chronic headaches?

4- Page 8: How confident are the authors on the new system for acquiring HR and respiratory data? Was the system validated?

5- Page 10: Are mobile (psychologist office) versus home setting (participant home) training going to be compared? These are two completely “stressful” environments...

6- Page 8: can the authors discuss why was not skin conductance level assessed as it measures sympathetic activation, that is also involved in the stress response?

7- Page 12, paragraph 3: it seems that the stressful scenarios were validated before they were developed. I would move this sentence to the end of paragraph 3. Where the relax scenarios also pre-tested?

8- STAI-Y1 will be filled in by each participant 20 times. Is this not excessive? How are you going to deal with the learning effect? Why not use just the VAS-A, before and after?

Minor Essential Revisions
9- Page 5, paragraph 4: DSS (Decision Support System)

10- Page 7: as mentioned previously stress maybe related to depression. On the other hand, depressive symptoms are not uncommon on these professionals. Should not a depression scale be included?
11- Page 7: after last paragraph: include which scale will be used to assess technological abilities.

12- Page 10: “Virtual scenarios for stress exposition” Do you mean exposure?

13- Page 12, paragraph 4: it would be nice to have a glimpse on what the nurses stressful scenarios will consist on.

14- Page 12, paragraph 5: the phrase “the participants have to imagine precisely how stress arises including respective thoughts and emotions” is a bit strong, as it is not possible to precisely assess imagination. How can the authors guaranty this?

15- Is it possible to further explain “INTERSTRESS will focus on modifying them through a more contextualized experiential process.”?

Discretionary Revisions

16- Is stress one of the sources of anxiety and depression as pointed in the text or can trace anxiety be, as well, a source of stress? This biunivocal path could also be discussed. Eventually, this relation is tangentially addressed on the 2nd paragraph of page 4: “These disorders depend a great deal on how the person experiencing a stressor is put together —psychologically and physically”.

17- As stated on the third paragraph of page 4, it might seem that INTERSTRESS is going to solve the problem of “the poor quality of trials, considerable heterogeneity observed between trials and evidence of significant publication bias make the pooled findings insecure.” Please, reformulate the paragraph.

18- Page 4, paragraph 3: It would be useful to have further explanations on what the Interreality paradigm is all about.

19- Page 13, paragraph 4: asking the participants to fill a short online questionnaire after the “home experience” would help to assess if they really have learned from the experience.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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