Reviewer's report

Title: Application of a three-session-procedure based on experiential learning in a tooth brushing course for Chinese dental students

Version: 1 Date: 07 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Wendy Hartford

Reviewer's report:

The authors have made the majority of the required changes. The language and grammar are improved. However, the following remain unclear.

My recommendation to accept after final revisions is dependent on making a clear distinction between conclusions drawn from the results and assumptions that the learning cultivated the students' abilities to evaluate tooth brushing methods of friends, relatives and future patients

Page 13 line 7/8: The students' enhanced knowledge enabled them.... How do the results support this statement?

Page 15. Line 18-55: This paragraph is confusing. Lines 44-49 appear to contradict the previous statements. On the one hand the authors state that there is no difference between manual and electric tooth brushing techniques, and on the other there is a significant difference in obvious plaque clearance. Please clarify how this leads to a conclusion that choice of brushing method should be a personal selection.

I suggest that "the results further verified... begin the next paragraph.

Page 27. Line 24/26: Please clarify how "The electric toothbrush was increasingly accepted" shows that the students learned and compared two methods.

Page 18. Lines 7-19 is repeated in the conclusion.

Page. 3. Line 38 and Page 18. Conclusion: While the students learned how to evaluate brushing their own teeth, the results do not show that they were able to evaluate tooth brushing methods of friends, relatives and future patients (stage 4 of EL). This ties in to my comment for page 13 above and is a limitation of your study. Refer to your statement: The aim was to improve dental
students’ knowledge and practice of tooth brushing, beginning to cultivate their abilities to conduct evaluations with future patients by using TSP.

Your results indicate students improved their personal knowledge and practice using TSP. Their improved personal knowledge may have the potential to cultivate their abilities to conduct evaluation with future patients, but your study does not show that it did. Thus this claim is an assumption. The final, 4th phase of experiential learning was not evaluated in this study. This should be made clear.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
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