Reviewer's report

Title: The impact of clinical placements on the emotional intelligence of occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech pathology, and business students: a longitudinal study

Version: 0 Date: 06 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Kristin Janke

Reviewer's report:

Thanks to the authors for a cleanly written report of their work. The text is generally succinct and direct, the methods are well described, the findings are clear and the arguments are well presented and well referenced. Below are recommendations to polish the manuscript and to enhance utility for the reader.

The introduction makes the case for a focus on the final phase of the health professions' degree programs and for testing of the effects of clinical placements. The third paragraph could benefit from a topic sentence. The main point seems to actually be made in paragraph four (the literature above presents conflicting results regarding changes in the EI scores). Paragraph 3 also meanders through a number of references and it's not quite clear where it's going. Please tighten this up.

Under methods, I appreciated the discussion of the theoretical perspective that was chosen and the selection of the Model of Emotional Social Intelligence. While I can understand the desire for the emotional strain components, this Model adds elements that are not strong facets of other EI models (Mayer, Goleman). Please explain these differences so the reader is clear that your measure of EI may be different that one's they're accustomed to. As written now, the dialogue describes what's covered, but not what's similar and different to other models.

Personally, I found the wellbeing indicator a bit curious. Please add a some text describing the thought behind the inclusion of happiness in this instrument. If this is something that needs to be interpreted relative to the other facets of the instrument, please add to results and discussion as appropriate.

In addition, be sure to explain the relationship between your chosen Model and the EQ-i2.0.

Under results, please provide a more thorough accounting of participants and steps to enrollment. It appears that you started with 1400 students. Perhaps everyone took the instrument? 11 were excluded, but only 376 enrolled? I'm struggling to put the sequence of events and numbers together.
In addition, please describe the relevance of the Inconsistency Index, Positive Impression and Negative Impression scores as an exclusion criterion. Were there other inclusion and/or exclusion criteria that resulted in the reduced enrollment? What assurance do we have that the remaining participants are representative?

In the discussion, it would be helpful to have a closer analysis of your findings vs Clark. Were the same instruments used? Were increases seen in similar EI areas? Similarly, you mention differences from Lewis and Larin. However, please report the timeframes of their studies for comparison.

The discussion of implications for clinical supervisors, university educators and employers is helpful and weaves in useful literature.

In the conclusions, please add in highlights of your findings, as the text now emphasizes the literature discussed.

Table 1 is a helpful and well organized overview of participant demographics. An asterix (*) appears next to self-perception in table two. However, I was not able to find its definition in the legend. Happiness appears to be bolded. This might be an error. Consider highlighting p values that meet significance criteria. Figure 2 appears to be sorted by increase. Given the implications for supervisors, educators and employers, consider sorting by decrease. This may aid in reinforcing your text and identifying areas for continued programming and support.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript.

**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.

Yes
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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Acceptable

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