Reviewer’s report

Title: Students with specific learning disabilities experiences of pre-registration physiotherapy education: A qualitative study

Version: 1 Date: 01 Aug 2019

Reviewer: Reviewer 2

Reviewer's report:

"PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:

OBJECTIVE - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses one or several testable research questions? (Brief or other article types: is there a clear objective?)
Yes - there is a clear objective

DESIGN - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?
Yes - the approach is appropriate

EXECUTION - Are the experiments and analyses performed with sufficient technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?
Yes - experiments and analyses were performed appropriately

STATISTICS - Is the use of statistics in the manuscript appropriate?
N/A - there are no statistics in this study

INTERPRETATION - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?
No - there are major issues

OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Has the author addressed your concerns sufficiently for you to now recommend the work as a technically sound contribution? If not, can further revisions be made to make the work technically sound?
Probably - with minor revisions

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: This ms addresses a very timely topic within physiotherapy education. This is often a difficult population to access so the authors should be commended on their efforts to understand student experiences from an exploratory qualitative perspective. The authors have addressed the reviewers' concerns but not in all areas. There is a tendency to "over-interpret" the data - expressing findings definitively. The ms needs to include an explicit para on strengths and limitations of their work, articulate what this adds to the literature and reflect on the directions for future research. There are instances of "'informal"' writing.
REQUESTED REVISIONS:

There is a tendency to "over-interpret" the data by expressing findings definitively both in the results and discussion - for example pg 18 ln 58. There is a need to more explicitly relate the findings to the purpose (to explore experiences to elucidate what factors might be relevant…"). The 4th theme title is not reflective of the description and quotes; some of these could be incorporated into the other themes as there is some repetition.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

The ms needs to be proofread. Acronyms or short form needs to be spelled out at first usage (eg UK, HEI). Do not use capital letters inappropriately (e.g. pg 4 ln 20). Lack of clarity in writing at times.
Pg 4 ln 10-13 replace "people" with university personnel or faculty.
Pg 4 ln 52-54 - I could not understand this statement "for clarity…" The final statement of this para pg 5 ln 28-30 - is strong and perhaps adding this to the beginning of the para would help the reader understand your perspective.
Pg 6 ln 14-16. Confusing. Do you mean the prevalence estimate of PT students with a disability is 12% - pls clarify.
Pg 10 ln 31-36 - challenging sentence - "As the participant above indicates" - recommend rewording
Pg 11 ln 57 - I do not understand "this source of reliability" - challenging sentence. Do you mean the key is early identification of learning disabilities lays in better awareness of the conditions at a number of levels?
Pg 12 ln 24-32 Adding a summary para is excellent but I struggles to understand the meaning of the first sentence. Not sure what "this" refers to in the second sentence.
Pg 12 ln 45 "unpicks" ?? perhaps unpacks. Same with pg 15 ln 52
Pg 13 ln 1 - example of informal writing - delete "a little"
Pg 13 ln 54 - reform?? Should be reframe??
Pg 19 ln 59 sentence beginning with "While there may be…." - should be deleted and added to limitations.
Pg 20 ln 13- 18 - overinterpretation of findings.
Pg 21 ln 5-13 - check grammar, not a sentence
Pg 24 para 1 - watch overinterpretion here

Consider title change to better reflect the focus on learning disabilities and not disabilities in general."
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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?
If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

This reviewer has been recruited by a partner organization, Research Square. Reviewers with declared or apparent competing interests are not utilized for these reviews. This reviewer has agreed to publication of their comments online under a Creative Commons Attribution License attributed to Research Square and was paid a small honorarium for completing the review within a specified timeframe. Honoraria for reviews such as this are paid regardless of the reviewer recommendation.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal