Author’s response to reviews

Title: Transcultural adaption and preliminary evaluation of “Understanding low back pain” patient education booklet

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed our revised manuscript entitled Transcultural adaption and preliminary evaluation of “Understanding low back pain” patient education booklet by Anna-Sofia Simula, Hazel J Jenkins, Riikka Holopainen, Petteri Oura, Katariina Korniloff, Arja Häkkinen, Esa-Pekka Takala, Mark J. Hancock and Jaro Karppinen.

We have carefully responded to the comments of both reviewers, and believe that our manuscript has improved considerably. Thus, we would be grateful if our manuscript could be re-evaluated for publication in BMC Health Services Research.

Below we provide a point-by-point response to the reviewers’ comments. Additions have been highlighted and deletions have been marked with strikethrough in the revised manuscript.

Sincerely, on behalf of the authors,
This is an interesting piece describing the development of a Low back pain information leaflet into Finnish, and the barriers and facilitators to its use within a cluster randomised trial. The development of the booklet utilised both health care professionals and consumers, and had 4 iterations. The finalised booklet was used within the trial, and its use was evaluated by two different questionnaires to both health care professionals (physios) and patients. Although the professionals reported the use of the book helped to reduce unnecessary imaging, the patients did not report the same responses.

It is interesting that although they reported the booklet to be helpful, the positive responses were less than 50%, suggesting that maybe the booklet is more beneficial to practitioners than to patients? This should possibly be considered within the limitations.

Author response: We thank the reviewer for their constructive comments. According to our study, the patients and practitioners found different items helpful, but it is true the overall rates of agreement were higher for practitioners. We have added further comment of this issue in the discussion. The new section reads:

“Patients and clinicians were asked different questions about the usefulness of the booklet but overall the ratings were lower for patients than for clinicians. Despite this approximately 50% of patients still considered the booklet as useful for understanding their LBP and only 21% thought the booklet was not helpful at all (Figure 2.). Considering the primary aim of the booklet is to reduce inappropriate imaging among LBP patients (GP behaviour) and the booklet is a simple, cheap and low risk intervention, we think the 21% of patients not finding the booklet helpful is acceptable.”

Minor alterations:

The aim on lines 119-121 is different to the aim in the abstract line 55-57. Please correct and make clear which is the aim of this study.
Author response: The aims have been corrected on lines 56 and 120-122.

Line 397 how does pain neuroscience education fit into the education delivered in this book? I have not seen this phrase used yet, and now suddenly to use it feels a bit disconnected.

Author response: We agree with the reviewer that using this different term here is not helpful and therefore the sentence has been reworded.

Table 3 the figures and percentages don’t seem to be accurate - 24/59 is 41% and 35/59 is 59%? Please check

Author response: 24 individuals having high intensity of LBP agreed with the statement a) ‘I believe that the booklet is useful for my understanding of LBP’, which is 45% of all individuals having high LBP intensity (n=53=24+18+11). The number of patients with frequent low back pain (n=65) and those with high intensity low back pain (n=53) have been added to the table key. The percentages have been rechecked and no mistakes were found.

Reviewer 2 (Ping Wang, Ph.D):

The manuscript aimed to translate a new patient education booklet from English into Finnish and evaluate its usefulness from the perspectives of both LBP (low back pain) patients and practitioners. The results showed that the booklet helped reduce inappropriate imaging among LBP patients, and also encouraged the communication between patients and practitioners which would benefit the clinical practice. In general, the manuscript was well-written, I have below comments:

1. The organization of the manuscript could be improved. It’s great that authors used different iterations to improve the translation, but the evaluation /questionnaire by LBP patients and practitioners seemed to be vague. Authors should clarify the recruitments of patients and practitioners, inclusion / exclusion criteria, and study design. For instance, there were descriptions "health care units", "primary health care units", "occupational health care units", but was unclear which were actually used in the surveys.

Author response: We agree with the reviewer that clarification is needed. Please see additional information on lines 178-183 and smaller clarifications on following section on lines 184-204 where the additions are highlighted.

2. Tables 3 to 5 need better explanations, the questionnaires and the surveys seemed to be partially overlapping, not sure if authors could make the manuscript more concise by re-organize the Tables.
Author response: We have added explanations in the footnotes of Tables 3-5 and a short explanation to methods section (lines 228-229).

3. In "Methods" section, authors mentioned that "cluster randomized controlled trials" and "randomized pair-wise" schemes were utilized, please give more details.

Author response: We have described previously (lines 126-128) that this study is a sub-study of two parallel cluster randomized studies. In this study, we used the data only from the intervention arm of the cluster randomized studies. Please see Figure 1. Please see the added text on chapter: Stage 2. Evaluation of the booklet by LBP patients and practitioners, lines 178-183 to provide the additional details.

4. The manuscript seems to use questionnaire of both web-based and paper version, could these be consistent using same format?

Authors response: In this study we used only web-based questionnaires. We have checked the manuscript to make sure there is no mention of paper-based questionnaires.