Reviewer’s report

Title: What is the extent and quality of documentation and reporting of fidelity to implementation strategies: a scoping review

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Reviewer: Fabiana Lorencatto

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Date: 10.08.2015
Manuscript title: ‘What is the extent and quality of documentation and reporting of fidelity to implementation strategies: A scoping review.’
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Reviewer: Fabiana Lorencatto

Reviewer’s Report:

This manuscript is a second revision of a previously reviewed manuscript. Overall, I still feel this revised manuscript represents a significant improvement on the previous two submissions, and that the authors have satisfactorily addressed the majority of reviewer’s comments.

I have a few outstanding minor comments that I feel would benefit from consideration:

Abstract

• I feel the methods section of the abstract would be more informative if it provided more detail on the scoring scale/checklist used in this review, rather than outlining the details of the broader scoping review methodology (which is not unique to this review). Detail on the 3-point scoring scale and the different fidelity components (i.e. adherence/dose/responsiveness) is needed in order for the reader to interpret the results, and to better understand one of the main conclusions (i.e. recognition of the value of a simple checklist to assess reporting of fidelity of implementation strategies).

Introduction

• The introduction is now very long (6+ pages). The first half of the introduction feels in part like an extensive lecture summarising all of the wider fidelity literature to date. I appreciate much of this content has been added in response to previous reviewer’s comments, and I still agree that it is still important to acknowledge other fidelity frameworks, and to argue why the Dusenbury framework was chosen over these. However, I feel this needs to be done much more succinctly so that the introduction arrives to ‘the current study’ sooner. Otherwise, the introduction becomes slightly dense and difficult to follow/ identify
what is of relevance to the current study.

• I also feel that it would be helpful to differentiate between fidelity to
evidence-informed interventions vs fidelity to implementation strategies much
earlier in the introduction. These terms are first introduced in line 2, pg.1 of the
introduction, but not defined until page 3.

o Of note, I feel the now expanded definition of evidence-informed interventions
vs implementation strategies is much clearer than in the previous manuscripts.

Methods

• The distinction between ‘dose received’ and ‘participant responsiveness’ is now
clearer thanks to the added examples on the bottom of page 13 in the Methods
section.

o Nonetheless, the authors should acknowledge in the discussion that ‘dose
received’ as conceptualised in this framework is a relatively shallow assessment
of whether or not participants ‘received’ an intervention/implementation strategy
compared to comparable constructs in other fidelity frameworks. According to the
checklist in this review, ‘dose received’ could be assessed via whether or not
target recipients attended a session. However, one could attend a session but
not understand any of the content covered, thereby not ‘receiving’ much. The
Bellg et al. 2004 BCC fidelity framework construct of ‘receipt’ requires that not
only participants attend the session, but display evidence of having understood
the intervention, acquired the necessary competences (i.e. knowledge/skills etc).

Step 4: Extracting the data, bottom of page 12, lines 261-269. It would be helpful
if the authors also expanded in text as to how the scoring criteria were applied.
This is the core of the analysis in this review and merits more detail. In particular,
I found the author’s response to one of my previous comments particularly
helpful in facilitating my understanding of this scoring criteria: ‘Yes we do report
our findings on the documentation of fidelity to implementation strategies as a
‘whole’ per included study with a single fidelity score. Even when several
implementation strategies were utilized in a particular study the scoring schema
outlined in Table 1 clarifies how this is possible. Briefly for each of the three
domains, a score of 2 suggests that all implementation strategies met the
condition. A score of 1 suggests that some but not all of the implementation
strategies met the condition. A score of 0 suggests that at least one condition
was not met.’ It might be worth considering adding such a similar, brief
explanation to the in-text description of the methods. This would also facilitate the
interpretation of results on the top of p.17.

Discussion

• Implications for future research: I think overall the discussion is good and now
better highlights the novel contributions of this review to the field. As a minor
additional suggestion for implications for future research: reporting data on
fidelity of implementation strategies would also provide information which might
help advance the field/theoretical understanding of implementation strategies by
shedding some light as to what might make one implementation strategy more effective than another, or what makes the same implementation strategy more effective in some context than others. This is particularly valid for implementation strategies such as audit and feedback, which are widely used, but have modest/highly variable effects, and there is limited clarity as to what makes one A&F strategy more effective than another (Ivers et al. 2012).

General

• On a minor note, it would be helpful if the authors kept key terminology around fidelity as consistent as possible throughout the manuscript. I found lines 404-407 in the discussion confusing. I was unclear whether ‘adherence’ here referred to fidelity more generally (which I think is the intention), or adherence in terms of the component of the adapted Dusenbury checklist. Given the wide variation in the use of terminology related to fidelity, consistency would help ensure clarity.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field.
Quality of written English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No further statistical review required.
Declaration of competing interests: None.

**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'