Reviewer’s report

Title: Exploring narratives of resilience among seven males living with spinal cord injury: A qualitative study

Version: 0 Date: 17 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Magnus Elfström

Reviewer’s report:

COMPREHENSIVE COMMENT

Thank you kindly for sharing this work with me. I think the manuscript includes several vivid descriptions of the participants' experiences of adjusting to life with a SCI. The aim is very well formulated (line 59-64), and I really agree with the authors that this is an important area for research with clear clinical implications (line 64-68).

Given my role as a reviewer in relation to this manuscript, I have some comments that I would like the authors to deal with.

MAJOR COMMENTS

1) I miss a more elaborated discussion of the internal and external validity of the results, or if you prefer to think of it in other concepts, like trustworthiness and transferability. For example, I miss a discussion of saturation. I would also like to read something about how the present sample might have influenced the results. In addition, which types of narratives might not have been mirrored?

2) Another important aspect of the validity discussion is a discussion of the role of retrospective recall and retrospective data. The problem that needs to be discussed more thorough is, as I see it, how you can argue that you explore an interplay across time using a cross sectional design? In that discussion, you could perhaps link to the formulations in the aim and the wise analytical perspective on the data by Riessman from the introduction. Consequently, I think the title of the paper should mirror the limitations that comes from this recall-retrospective-constructive-narrative problem.

3) I find the description of the analytical process a bit too comprehensive, especially line 124-125. I would need a bit more information about the analytical procedure in order to understand the internal validity and the saturation level better.

4) As the authors point out (line 367-368), resilience is a complex construct. I understand it as a meta concept. Therefore, I miss a more specific discussion about which theoretical concepts or theories that could be used to understand the empirical results of the study. Consequently, the more specific discussion would be helpful when it comes to thinking about how to support the
adjustment process as well as thinking about future studies of the complex process. One possibility, among others, would be to discuss the results more in relation to the situational coping approach, e.g. fighting spirit and optimism is mentioned in the sub-theme maintaining a positive outlook, and both of these (fighting spirit and optimism), as well as seeking social support, have been studied as situational coping strategies in other studies. Alternatively, if you could clarify the theoretical connections to the results already made in the discussion.

MINOR COMMENTS

5) Because Table 2 does not give specific methodological information, e.g. how some codes build a sub-theme, it is more of a results table from my standpoint. Moreover, the results information given in Table 2 is easily found in the text in the Results section. Thus, the table could be deleted.

6) Line 424-425: This formulation is generalizing. The study illustrates concrete examples.

7) Line 430: Not sure about the expression "lessons to be learned". I would prefer something that talks about giving examples.

8) Line 433-443: Good implications, although I would prefer a terminology that harmonized with the design and methodology, i.e. "illuminates" instead of "underlines" and "the possible role of friends in the rehabilitation process was shown" instead of "friends should may be actively involved".

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

No

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

Unable to assess

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.

Not relevant to this manuscript
Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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