Reviewer’s report

Title: BRIGHTLIGHT researchers as ‘dramaturgs’: creating There is a Light from complex research data

Version: 0 Date: 22 Apr 2020

Reviewer: Caroline Barker

Reviewer's report:

I think there are some good messages/learning in this paper that will be of interest to some audiences but the way it is currently presented doesn't do this well. I think you need to work on the way the information is presented. You also need to improve the way you present the evaluation, as I don't feel you show enough data to draw conclusions (particularly about the effect of the performances on the audience).

Suggest the title is more descriptive - I had no idea what the paper was going to be about - not knowing what BRIGHTLIGHT, There is Light or a dramaturg is.
The plain English summary is a good read that describes what to expect from the paper. The scientific abstract is much more complicated to read while not adding much.
Introduction - found it quite heavy to read, could try to make it more clear.
Context - quite a lot of information in here that I am not sure adds value to the stated purpose of the paper
The Cast - line 45/46, page 7 implies that you couldn't get 4 people from BRIGHTLIGHT cohort to join but then lines 54/55 implies you did. Not clear what you're trying to say. Having read a few times, I THINK this section means that BRIGHTLIGHT participants weren't able to be in the cast but were advisors for the workshops instead - but that 4 other young people with cancer (not in the study) were in the cast.
You use terms like dramaturg but not consistently throughout the paper which makes it easy to forget what the primary messaging is.
Lines 57-65 (p7) - what was rationale behind this decision?
P8 There is not much information about how the workshops were run and how the research was involved and integrated into the script. Others reading the paper wouldn't be able to learn from the minimal description of this stage.
'The Performance' - It is hard to interpret how many performances were done at each event, which had a panel discussion, what the intended audience was at each one (public, professional, patient) and how many people were at each performance. Table 2 could contain much more information.
'The Evaluation' - At this point in the paper, it is not clear 1) what objectives of the play were and how these relate to the evaluation, 2) which performances had evaluations 3) out of those evaluations, which had the panel discussion afterwards.
I think we need to see the audience breakdown (public, professional, patient) and whether or not they attended a panel discussion in order to make meaningful interpretations of your evaluation of the audience. This should be clear in table 3 and box 2
'The Cast' evaluation - not clear if you were just evaluating those in the theatre company (not those who auditioned because of their cancer experience) or both. This needs to be clear, and again the objectives of the work and what you are trying to learn from the evaluation is lacking.

'The researchers' evaluation - doesn't add much.

Page 12, bottom - the researchers obviously didn't attend every workshop. Think this information needs to be made clear when writing about the workshop stages.

'Discussion' paragraph 1. You say it had greater impact than we had anticipated - but what were you anticipating? What was the 'greater impact' and how does the data you collected support this.

Paragraph 2 - where is the data showing that the audience didn't understand it came from a programme of research. You reference box 2 for this at an earlier point in paper but box 2 does not evidence this.

'Conclusion' - I like this. The 'story' and 'lessons' you mention here should be put across to the reader throughout the paper. I don't think this is currently done in the best way.

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Quality of written English
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