Author's response to reviews

Title: Participant Experiences from Chronic Administration of a Multivitamin Versus Placebo on Subjective Health and Wellbeing: A Double-Blind Qualitative Analysis of a Randomised Controlled Trial

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Gabriel,

We would like to thank yourself and the reviewers for the latest evaluation of our manuscript, entitled “Participant Experiences from Chronic Administration of a Multivitamin Versus Placebo on Subjective Health and Wellbeing: A Double-Blind Qualitative Analysis of a Randomised Controlled Trial”. We are pleased to resubmit the manuscript which has been amended to include the reviewers requested changes. Please find below our response to each of the reviewers comments.

Sincerely,

Katherine Cox

Reviewer: Julia Rucklidge

I still feel that it would be very helpful for the reader if the authors included the ingredients and doses (although the RDAs were very helpful too) as it allows researchers to cross compare across the studies using micronutrients for the treatment of psychological symptoms. I will leave it to the editor to make the call about whether there is space for such a table.

A complete table of ingredients for the men’s and women’s treatments has now been included in the article.

On page 6, top paragraph, it would be helpful if the authors would add in the points they made to the reviewers about acute administration versus chronic administration.

The top paragraph of page six has now been amended as follows, to include an explanation of how abstaining from treatment on the morning of testing avoids acute effects.

- Participants attended a brief practice session during which written consent was obtained, eligibility was confirmed and they were familiarised with all study measures. Demographic characteristics that may have modified outcomes were recorded, including age, education and BMI and measures of trait anxiety (State-Trait Anxiety Inventory) [31], depression (Beck Depression Inventory – II) [32] and intelligence (WASI Matrix reasoning task) [33] were completed. Three testing sessions were undertaken: at baseline, Week 8 and Week 16. As this trial was concerned with chronic effects of supplementation, participants were asked to abstain from taking their tablet on the morning of testing sessions. This avoided any potentially confounding acute effects that a single day’s treatment may have had on assessments and which could not have been differentiated from the chronic effects of repeated and prolonged supplementation.

On page 9, after the quotes, there are participant numbers that I believe need to be removed.

All participant identification numbers have now been removed

Reviewer: Michele Larzelere

As per original comment #7: If this is standard, why are participant numbers not identified for other quoted comments? Consistency across the manuscript might be preferable.

All participant identification numbers have now been removed.