OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
- More motivations for all involved roles in the review process
- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://brieflands.com/briefland/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

Asian Journal of Sports Medicine
Article DOI: 10.5812/asjsm.103678
Published in: Asian Journal of Sports Medicine: 11(3); e103678

Peer Review Report for "Why Physical Inactivity Level Has Increased in the Iranian Population During the Past Decade? A Delphi Technique"

Author(s): Afifeh Khosravi, Bahar Hassanmirzaei, Maryam Selk-Ghaffari, Mona Rafiei, Mohammad Ali Mansournia, Ramin Kordi

Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 13 Apr 2020
Revised Date: 30 May 2020
Accepted Date: 10 Jul 2020

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | Revision (0)

21 Apr 2020

Dear AE,

The authors did qualitative research with the objective of “identifying the reasons for decreasing physical activity level in the community despite having national action plans for physical activity. They found some major obstacles that need to be addressed at the national level to improve the physical activity level. As a whole, the manuscript has been written well and results are practical. However, it needs some minor revisions as follows:

- Abstract: neither in the background nor in the objective, the name of Iran has been mentioned. Moreover, the Conclusion is “a recommendation’ rather than being a conclusion. Please modify it.
- Please do not use: “so” and replace it with “therefore”.
- First line after “Selection and Recruitment of Panel Members”: Do not use the capital letter for “Sports” in the middle of the sentence.
- Please remove: “databases’… none of the mentioned websites are databases.
- There are some other typo errors needed to address through the text.
- The conclusion is the same as the overall results at the beginning of the discussion.

Please re-word and rephrase the conclusion.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 2 May 2020

Dear AE,
Thank you very much for the opportunity to review the manuscript with the title: Identifying the reasons for increasing physical inactivity in the Iranian population during the past decade: A Delphi technique
Here the authors can find my comments and suggestions on this paper:
A) General comment: English writing
While this paper is very engaging in the topic, it is hard to follow and understand because of faulty English writing. It seems the authors need to rewrite the manuscript in some parts, especially abstract and discussion, consulting a native English writer.
Examples:
1) The authors used "increasing physical inactivity" in the topic or "decreasing physical activity level" in the abstract. Is there any evidence of an increasing trend? If not, a simple past tense should be used!
2) Once again in the abstract: The objective of this study was to use a Delphi technique ...?! It is better to say: The objective of this qualitative study was to identify...
3) In the abstract, some words and phrases are not meaningful or have better alternatives. "Executive guarantee" is meaningless in English, and it is a literal translation from Persian; I suggest using "complete enforceability" instead. The phrase "relevant ministries and organizations" would be replaced by "stakeholders". It would be better to recheck and rephrase all final statements for better understanding.
B) Major and minor comments:
1) Objectives: How can you help policy-making in developing countries by the consensus statement of experts working on the Iran national policies and action plans on physical activity?
2) Method:
a) Explain more why you chose the Delphi method and provide a summary of the employing characteristics and sequences.
b) What are your inclusion criteria for the expert panel?
c) Some data in the method should transfer to results (e.g., the last paragraph of round 1 or table 1).
3) Results:
a) You need to mention all related results based on rounds and sequences in results.
b) It is expected to distinguish consensus, agreement, and stability of response.
c) Explain more about table 1 contents (min, max, and total index weight). Additionally, add related data to the method of study.
4) Discussion: The authors need to compare your results with other developing countries.
5) Conclusion: Based on the study design, the authors cannot generalize their findings to other countries.
Thanks

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 3 May 2020

Dear EIC,
This is a study about the reasons for physical inactivity based on experts' opinions in Iran. Two reviewers have reviewed the document. There are some concerns with the study, and the reviewers have provided detailed feedback. Authors have put in great effort; however, it needs 'major revision' before the acceptance.
Thanks

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision (0)**

5 May 2020

Dear Authors,
Thank you for submitting your manuscript to Asian J Sports Med. Your manuscript has now been reviewed by two reviewers and an Associate Editor. I now have the reports of the Referees, which suggest that your manuscript might be suitable for publication following a number of revisions. I attach some reviewer comments and invite you to submit a revised version of your manuscript addressing the points made.
Thanks

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Reviewers' Comments:

Reviewer 1:
The authors did qualitative research with the objective of "identifying the reasons for decreasing physical activity level in the community despite having national action plans for physical activity. They found some major obstacles that need to be addressed at the national level to improve the physical activity level. As a whole, the manuscript has been written well and results are practical. However, it needs some minor revisions as follows:

Abstract: neither in the background nor in the objective, the name of Iran has been mentioned. Moreover, the Conclusion is "a recommendation' rather than being a conclusion. Please modify it.
Please do not use: "so" and replace it with "therefore".
First-line after "Selection and Recruitment of Panel Members": Do not use the capital letter for "Sports" in the middle of the sentence.
Please remove: "databases'… none of the mentioned websites are databases.
There are some other typo errors needed to address through the text.
The conclusion is the same as the overall results at the beginning of the discussion. Please re-word and rephrase the conclusion.

Reply to Reviewer 1:

We appreciate your valuable comments to improve the manuscript.

Following changes has been made in the manuscript.

In the background and in the objective, the name of Iran has been added.

Conclusion was modified.

So was replaced with "therefore.

First-line after "Selection and Recruitment of Panel Members": "Sports" was corrected.

In Selection and Recruitment of Panel Members of method "databases' was removed.

Type errors were corrected.

Conclusion was re-word and rephrase the conclusion.

Reviewer 2:
Dear Editor,
Thank you very much for the opportunity to review the manuscript with the title: Identifying the reasons for increasing physical inactivity in the Iranian population during the past decade: A Delphi technique
Here you can find my comments and suggestions on this paper:
A) General comment: English writing
While this paper is very engaging in the topic, it is hard to follow and understand because of faulty English writing. It seems the authors need to rewrite the manuscript in some parts, especially abstract and discussion, consulting a native English writer.
Examples:
1) The authors used "increasing physical inactivity" in the topic or "decreasing physical activity level" in the abstract. Is there any evidence of an increasing trend? If not, a simple past tense should be used!
2) Once again in the abstract: The objective of this study was to use a Delphi technique ...?! It is better to say: The objective of this qualitative study was to identify...
3) In the abstract, some words and phrases are not meaningful or have better alternatives. "Executive guarantee" is meaningless in English, and it is a literal translation from Persian; I suggest using "complete enforceability" instead. The phrase "relevant ministries and organizations" would be replaced by "stakeholders". It would be better to recheck and rephrase all final statements for better understanding.

Reply to reviewer 2

We appreciate your valuable comments to improve the manuscript.

Following changes has been made in the manuscript.

A) Manuscript was re written consulting a native English writer.

1) Increasing physical inactivity" in the topic or "decreasing physical activity level" in the abstract was replaced with simple past tense.

2) “The objective of this study was to use a Delphi technique” was replaced with “The objective of this qualitative study was to identify”.

3) *Executive guarantee" was replaced by "complete enforceability". The phrase "relevant ministries and organizations" was replaced by "stakeholders".*

B) Major and minor comments:
1) Objectives: How can you help policy-making in developing countries by the consensus statement of experts working on the Iran national policies and action plans on physical activity?

Reply

"Developing countries" was replaced with Iran.

2) Method:
a) Explain more why you chose the Delphi method and provide a summary of the employing characteristics and sequences.

Reply

This part was added to the method

"The Delphi technique is a consensus structured method used in various domains including policy planning. The principal of the method is facilitating experts in a specific domain to analyze a complex problem through a structured discussion group method to interpret rationales of the situation. Delphi technique consists of a series of questionnaire rounds, all designed based on an initial main challenging question. This study aimed to identify the gaps between physical activity policies and their impact on physical activity level. The "Delphi technique" was selected to conduct this research to achieve to a consensus, assess weaknesses and requirements, conduct a situation analysis and determine priorities to improve physical activity based on physical activity expert's opinion in Iran.
The "Delphi technique" process in this study consisted of literature review, selecting the research question, selection and recruitment of panel members, pilot study and conduction of round one (using an open question), round 2 (using a 5-point Likert scale) and round three (final ranking). "

b) What are your inclusion criteria for the expert panel?

Reply

Inclusion criteria was added to the method. “Inclusion criteria of the members of the expert panel were having adequate related knowledge in physical activity domain, having at least five year experiences in the physical activity domain and the willingness to participate in the study. These experts have been selected among all individuals active in the area of physical activity in Iran at educational, research, technology, academic and executive levels”.

c) Some data in the method should transfer to results (e.g., the last paragraph of round 1 or table 1).

Reply

Data was transferred to results part

3) Results:
a) You need to mention all related results based on rounds and sequences in results.
b) It is expected to distinguish consensus, agreement, and stability of response.
c) Explain more about table 1 contents (min, max, and total index weight). Additionally, add related data to the method of study.

Reply

3:

a) All related results based on rounds and sequences was transferred to results parts

b) A part titled as” Agreement, consensus and stability” was added to method.

“Delphi methods do not obligate the contributors to reach to an exclusive agreed conclusion; it is practical to evaluate if agreement exists or not in a specific domain. The term “agreement” or “consensus” could be specified within each round and between

rounds (17). In this study the agreement statement was defined as the phrases that were selected as “important” or “very important” by 50% of the participants and higher at round two. The sum of all the scores given by the participants in the 5-point Likert scale were expresses as total index weight following round two. With the purpose of assessing the stability of the response of the experts, at round two and three the questionnaire was send to participants twice with a two-week interval.”

C) Table contents of table 1 was explained in method part.

“In this study the agreement statement was defined as the phrases that were selected as “important” or “very important” by 50% of the participants and higher at round two. The sum of all the scores given by the participants in the 5-point Likert scale were expresses as total index weight following round two.”

4) Discussion: The authors need to compare your results with other developing countries.

Reply

Limited studies exist in this domain but existing evidence were added to the conclusion.

*“*In a systematic review by Hazzaa M. Al-Hazzaa enhanced urbanization, heavy traffic, inappropriate climate, cultural barriers, absence of social support, lack of physical education programs in female school and lack of time and appropriate infrastructure were determined as the major causes of physical inactivity in Saudi Arabia (18). In a systematic review by Benjamin et al. major barriers to physical activity in residents of middle east countries and United Arab Emirates were categorized as individual issues (including insufficient time and medical problems), social and policy related issued (including cultural laws for women and insufficient social support) and the environmental issues (including inappropriate climate and insufficient exercise facilities) (33). In a focus group study by Hoebeke et al. the principle barriers to physical activity at individual level among women of low income countries were exhaustion of

daily life duties, traditional challenges, medical problems, lack of child nursing support and insufficient reinforcement (34). In a study by Tawfik Amin et al. main barriers to leisure time physical activity was inappropriate climate, cultural issues, insufficient facilities and lack of time in Saudi Arabia (35). In a study by Samir et al. in Pakistan, main barrier to physical activity were insufficient information, inspiration and skills, domestic support, availability of environments suitable for physical activity, cost effective equipment and time (36). The finding of the studies mentioned is consistent with our study results at the individual level including inappropriate culture in the area of public sports, cultural and religious challenges restricting the activity of women in society, inappropriate physical education, insufficient information and advertisement on physical activity, low priority of physical activity among individuals and families. And existing inconsistency of the findings are because in previous studies challenges at policy making level were not evaluated. ."

5) Conclusion: Based on the study design, the authors cannot generalize their findings to other countries.

Reply

Conclusion was rewritten limited to Iran.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (1) 4 Jul 2020

Dear AE,
The study is reviewed carefully. According to comments and revisions by the author, this manuscript is accepted.
Thanks

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (1) 10 Jul 2020

Dear EIC,
The second round of peer review is complete and reviewers are satisfied by the changes. Now we accept the article for publication.
Regards,

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (1) 10 Jul 2020

Dear Authors,
The second round of peer review of your manuscript has been completed, and I am pleased to inform you that your manuscript has now been accepted for publication in our journal.
Regards