Reviewer’s report

Title: Physical activity behaviours of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) women living in Australia: A qualitative study of sociocultural influences

Version: 1 Date: 7 October 2010

Reviewer: Harriet Radermacher

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper about the sociocultural influences on the physical activity behaviours of women from four different CALD groups living in Australia. The topic is both important and interesting. With a couple of minor essential revisions, and several discretionary revisions to consider, I would recommend this paper for publication. I do not see that any major compulsory revisions need to be made.

Overall, I found this paper to be very well written, concise and well structured. It adequately addressed all the points listed for reviewers to consider. It was enjoyable to read such a lengthy and comprehensive description of the findings, along with a sound discussion and useful suggestions and strategies for culturally appropriate and sensitive health promotion practice.

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS

1. General

The authors refer to both ‘respondents’ and ‘participants’ throughout the manuscript. I suggest that the former term is replaced by the latter, and used consistently throughout the document. The term ‘respondents’ implies that they people responded to specific questions more in line with that of a questionnaire. I think ‘participants’ better reflect the nature of their involvement.

2. Background, third para:

The authors indicate that the existing literature has not addressed the specific barriers, challenges, and enablers faced by CALD women living in Australia. This is untrue as I, for one, have been involved in a large and relevant study – and almost certainly the reason why I was approached to review this paper. I have inserted the relevant references to the publications for the authors’ interest. This study specifically looked at the experiences of older CALD people, and used quantitative methods to investigate the barriers and facilitators to physical activity. I’m not suggesting that the authors need to make reference to this study, just that they amend the sentence that indicates there is ‘no’ existing literature. Clearly the current study provides builds on this and provides some essential qualitative insights.

Bird, S., Kurowski, W., Feldman, S., Browning, C., Lau, R., Radermacher, H., et al. (2009). The Influence of the Built Environment and Other Factors on the


DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS

3. Methods, Study participants
How many participants in each CALD group?

4. Study design and procedures, second para
The authors note that an interpreter was used during four focus groups to accommodate CALD group participants who spoke minimal English. Having facilitated focus groups with bilingual interpreters present, I know the challenges associated with this arrangement (e.g. if every comment needs to be translated then it severely disrupts the flow of the group discussion and the data generated). It might be useful to specify which groups required an interpreter, and if the researchers were aware of any impact on the data that were generated as compared to the other groups.

5. Study design and procedures, third para
It was useful that sources were provided in relation to the questions asked in the focus groups. However, to assist readers’ (and save time finding the sources) it might be useful if one or two questions were inserted by way of an example.

6. Results, common themes
Based on what is written under each theme, I suggest that the authors re-word some of the thematic headings to better describe the findings. For example, I would suggest a heading such as ‘Levels of physical activity change upon migration’ or ‘More active in home country’ rather than ‘Differing physical activity levels’ as it more closely reflects the findings.

7. Results, Knowledge of physical activity (and first para of Discussion)
The authors report that ‘respondents had a good knowledge of what physical activity meant’. According to what definition or standard? I think the authors unintentionally tend to assume that there is a universal definition of physical activity – which I predict is actually based on white, western, middle class definitions. I think the authors need to acknowledge and be explicit about the fact that they are judging their participants’ responses according to a certain assumed standard.
8. Results, common themes, psychological and sociocultural factors, second para (after quote)
This paragraph is very interesting, but its value is lost because the message is not clearly explained. It would be useful if the second part of the first sentence was expanded and clarified. In particular, I don’t think it is clear what the authors mean by linking their own health to the health of their family.

9. Results, common themes, environmental factors, third para
The authors report that respondents were unaware of the physical activity initiatives in their local area. This is assuming that there are some available?

10. Results, ethnic-specific themes, Bosnian, second para and quote
I don’t think the quote used really reflects what is said in the text. Perhaps the authors could explain what the respondent meant by the last sentence. I also think the second sentence should be rephrased, for example, ‘for several respondents trauma was reported to be a motivator for physical activity, on the basis that they believed physical activity to promote psychological wellbeing’.

11. Results, ethnic-specific themes, Sudanese, first quote
I’m not sure I understand this quote. An explanatory sentence would be useful.

12. Discussion, fourth para
Transport was listed to be a common barrier (environmental factor) but it is not explicitly discussed as a barrier in the results section. Rather, from the data presented, it is discussed by participants in relation to the changing levels of physical activity they undertake due to their new surroundings.

13. Strengths and limitations, first para
What does ‘a more concentrated overview’ mean? Re-wording this may be useful.

14. Strengths and limitations, second para
There are not just ‘a number of other CALD groups in Australia’, there are in excess of 200. The authors may want to amend this. It also might be useful to recognise/reflect on the great range in age of participants and also that the average age was quite different depending on cultural group.

15. Table 1
‘Country of Birth’ is not a very appropriate term for this category – ‘CALD’ or ‘cultural’ group may be more appropriate. I would also suggest that a different table layout may be more reader-friendly as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Birth</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean age</th>
<th>Years in Aus</th>
<th>Married (n/%)</th>
<th>Children (n/%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sudanese
Bosnian
Arabic speaking
All

MINOR ISSUES NOT FOR PUBLICATION
Methods, Study participants
Remove ‘(4)’ prior to the word ‘Sudanese’.
Discussion, fifth para
Replace ‘to’ with ‘of’ physical activity.
Discussion, sixth para
Replace ‘then’ with ‘than’ normal by-products…
Discussion, twelfth para
Replace ‘activity’ with ‘active’.
Strengths and limitations, second para
Remove ‘of’ in the sentence: ‘a national profile regarding the physical activity behaviours…’
Remove the hyphen in between ‘large-representative’
Replace ‘multiple’ with ‘multiple’
Conclusions
The authors refer to ‘ethno-specific’ themes – it’s probably better to be consistent and use ethno- or ethnic- but not both.

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