Reviewer’s report

Title: Creating Healthy Environments: Focusing on the social environment in the evaluation of an Aboriginal health promotion program

Version: 1 Date: 16 February 2011

Reviewer: Gerjo Kok

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Interesting study; especially the ecological analysis. Some major and minor remarks.

Major:

1. The dependent variable is store turnover. That method is not explained when mentioned the first time on the top of page 4, while later the way that is performed in practice is not completely clear. Moreover, one of the strategies, fruit share, involves providing fruit and other activities. Is that fruit part of the turnover? Then the outcome is not surprising. I would also like more justification of store turnover to be the appropriate measure for all activities for the community: “a cross section of the community”?

2. Table 1 presents the coding of the activities. Category 1 is not self-explaining. However, I don’t see why this table is there because the results are presented qualitatively, which is fine, but the coding is not relevant here.

3. Top of page 6: “Individuals’ intakes were not of interest” needs a little elaboration.

4. Page 6: I always found the distinction between categories, settings and targets confusing. Why is interpersonal not a setting (families)? How can we have community as setting but not as target? I understand that the authors follow the system of Richard at al., but some reflection in the discussion would be helpful. Moreover, the current description of the ecological analysis does not say much about how the activities are initiated and what change methods or techniques are used. How does the HP get [ORG-ORG] to collaborate?

Minor:

5. Sometimes the notation is HP#ORG, sometimes HP#ORG#IND. I assume that all activities are supposed to finally influence IND?

6. Page 7, reference 4 is not about Canada but the USA and the Netherlands.

7. The Health Summer School is an interesting in terms of ecology. On page 5 it is mentioned that the summer course targets health promotion practitioners. On page 11 that is presented as HP#IND and as HP#ORG#IND. The first one is questionable, as I would assume that IND always stands for the final target
individuals. The second one is interesting because it describes a health promoter (probably also from an organisation) targeting a health promotion organisation (another/).

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'