Reviewer’s report

Title: A review of population-based prevalence studies of physical activity in adults in the Asia-Pacific region

Version: 1 Date: 7 October 2011

Reviewer: Charlie Foster

Reviewer’s report:

The question is appropriate and the paper is well written.

Discretionary Revisions

The methods may be improved by providing further details on the definition of inclusion criteria for possible surveys, (i) clarifying the age range of the populations of included papers, and (ii) how representativeness of population-based estimates was assessed (a key inclusion criteria).

Please why travel surveys were not included in this review.

Please provide details of the sources for weighting data (population estimates).

Please could the authors provide a rationale for not assessing the fidelity of the instruments used in surveys with their original form. This might highlight the issue of translation of instruments between countries and sub-populations. It might also be worth commenting on the lack of information to make an assessment of the data preparation and analysis techniques used by surveys. If you wish standardisation of instruments this is also an important element of this principle.

“Fugitive” literature is a great expression, does this also have a reference?

The authors present excellent data about the domains of physical activity assessed within surveys but it would be helpful to raise the issue about physical activities related to home or garden. This may be very relevant to populations who also undertake food growing activities at home but are not assessed in surveys and hence contribute to an underestimate of total physical activity. This also supports the view stated in the final sentence of the opening paragraph of the discussion. This sentence could be improved by splitting into tow shorter sentences.

The authors make a strong assertion that more intensive research is needed to understand and explain differences using mixed methods. This is an reasonable solution but also raises an issue for consideration that instruments are not designed by and with the populations studied. Is this a failure of the instrument or its use or its application?

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