Reviewer's report

Title: Information and communication technologies for approaching smokers: A descriptive study in primary healthcare

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Reviewer: Raquel Paz Castro

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General comments
The paper aims at investigating the distribution of and the socio-demographic variables related to information and communication technologies (ICT) use among smokers in a Spanish sample. Giving the lack of recent studies on this topic in Spain and Eastern European countries, the study could be of importance for the development of interventions based on ICT.

However, to strengthen the paper the authors should elaborate on some points particularly from the methods section.

• The authors should elaborate on the study design. Which kind of and how representative are the participating clinics? Which were the characteristics of the interviewing situation?

• Also they should elaborate on the variable “occupational social class” and dependent variable “ICTs availability and use” and give some examples of the questions/items to enhance the understanding. Are the questions comparable to those used in other international studies? Why did they choose to dichotomize both variables, and is it justified? They also could have kept the four categories for the dependent variable “ICT use” and calculate the OR through multinomial logit models.

• The argumentation in the discussion could be more consistent relating to the ICT. They mention the potential of the sms channel in their conclusion part but don’t highlight the advantages of the sms-channel in the discussion. On the other hand, it seems that the authors highlight the advantages of the e-mail channel, because of their own ongoing study (TABATIC) more than because of their collected data in this study.

Minor comments

• The categorization of the variable age seems arbitrary. The report of the results referring to the variable age isn’t consistent in the text (once the young are 18-45, another time 18-35 years old).

• The words dichotomic and polynomial are miswritten in the statistical analysis section.

• The results should be supported by critical values of #2 tests, OR values (with CI in brackets) and the p-values in the text.
• The number of participants (N=) is missing in table 3, 4 and 5.

• The explanatory statement referring to the inclusion of both, occupational social class and education should be relocated to the methods section instead of the discussion part.

The bibliography includes a large number of older papers. Important recent papers on the distribution of ICT and the awareness and adoption gap of ICT are missing, same as latest reviews to ICT based interventions on smokers, e.g.


Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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