Reviewer's report

Title: Establishing key components of yoga interventions for musculoskeletal conditions: A Delphi survey

Version: 1 Date: 9 April 2014

Reviewer: Holger Cramer

Reviewer's report:

The authors present a well and clearly written manuscript on an important and timely question: a Delphi survey on key components of yoga interventions for musculoskeletal conditions. The manuscript is well-focused and the methods and results are described exhaustive. There are only a few minor points that need clarification:

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. The abstract is missing in the manuscript.
2. In the background section, the authors state that “Evidence suggests that yoga has a moderate effect on pain and functional outcomes across a range of musculoskeletal conditions [20-22]. However, results are tempered by the substantial heterogeneity and methodological weaknesses associated with these intervention studies.” For low back pain and neck pain, several of the available studies are of high methodological quality. While the statement on “methodological weaknesses” applies for most of the other musculoskeletal conditions, it does not apply for spinal pain.
3. It was interesting to read that mindfulness was considered a key component of yoga interventions while meditation was not. While mindfulness is implicitly included in most yoga traditions, it is normally regarded to be a mainly Buddhist practice. It might be worthwhile to discuss the relation of yoga and mindfulness; and whether mindfulness can be regarded an inherent yogic practice.
4. On page 16 it is stated that “Instruction of postural alignment was included in the list of Delphi recommendations, yet provision of props for class practice (used to improve alignment) was not. Diversity in panellists’ opinions regarding prop use clarifies this anomaly.” I would not call this finding an anomaly. Postural alignment and the use of props are regarded as belonging together in some yoga traditions (e.g. iyengar) but not in others (e.g. traditional hatha yoga where alignment is regarded as important while no props are used).

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.