Reviewer’s report

Title: Older Ghanaian Adults' Perceptions of Physical Activity: An Exploratory, Mixed Methods Study

Version: 0 Date: 19 Nov 2018

Reviewer: Wojtek Chodzko-Zajko

Reviewer’s report:

General Comments:

There is much to like about this study. Population aging and the rise of non-communicative diseases is unquestionably a serious public health concern across the globe, including the developing world. The paper provides a valuable first glimpse into perceptions of the role of physical activity in chronic disease prevention held by older adults living in Ghana. While the paper is clearly both exploratory and descriptive, it provides some significant indicators for future research, and for future public policy.

Specific Comments:

Abstract

Clear and concise

Background

I found the background section to be well written and carefully argued.

It would be helpful to provide a brief synopsis of the evidence linking physical activity participation and the prevention, management, and treatment of non-communicative diseases. It is likely that the paper will be read by policy makers, and others who are less familiar with the impressive evidence base in support of the implementation of community based physical activity interventions.

In most countries around the world, older persons' preferences for different types of physical activity are highly individualized, with some persons preferring to be active on their own or with a partner, and others preferring to exercise in a group setting. The reference to participants expressing a preference for "group-based activity" is likely to reflect the sampling procedure used and this statement should probably be qualified accordingly.

Methods:
The methods and procedures are clearly described and appropriate.

While it would have been better to be able to document the physical activity levels of the participants more directly through accelerometry, the GPAC serves as an acceptable, if flawed proxy. There is a considerable inconsistency between participants responses to the question about whether they are meeting the physical activity guidelines (51%) and the equivalent GPAC response (82%). Evidence from other data collected in other countries suggest that both numbers are likely to overestimate actual physical activity levels.

Results:

The qualitative data are interesting. It would be helpful to provide some additional information about each of the individuals who were quoted in the text. After each quote the authors could include the age, gender, and physical activity level (active, insufficiently active, inactive) to help provide some context behind each quote.

The quantitative data, while descriptive in nature, are nonetheless quite interesting and informative.

Discussion:

In general, I found the discussion of the results to be appropriate and reasonable.

Two minor suggestions

It would be safer to state "The qualitative and quantitative results of the study provide insight into older Ghanaian adults' self-reported health and physical activity status..." since neither health nor physical activity status was directly determined.

The concern raised about the accuracy of the GPAC is appropriate at certainly not unique to this study. Perhaps the authors could add some more detail with respect to how a follow up study could explore these issues more objectively.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**

If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**

If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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