Reviewer’s report

Title: "You feel like you're part of something bigger": Exploring motivations for community garden participation in Melbourne, Australia

Version: 1 Date: 08 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Pauline Marsh

Reviewer's report:

Dear Jonathan and co-authors,

Thank you for attending to the comments made on the first draft of this manuscript. This is a much stronger paper. There are, however, some minor issues that need to be addressed to ensure the article is of a publishable standard. My motivation for providing this additional feedback is as a fellow Community Garden researcher. I really feel that we need to ensure a very high quality in our work, to do justice to what we know is an incredibly valuable public health resource.

Introduction:
The opening paragraph can be strengthened. Currently, it is a little confusing for the following reasons. The percentage of urban population is not the same as evidence of "unprecedented growth", which is the evidence you need. I think you are drawing a very long bow with the claim that the acute sense of socio-environmental problems is evident in disconnection from food systems and geographical distances between producer and consumer, as this cannot quite be substantiated. What are the concerns that Andersson et al. identify, and are the cultural and biodiversity perspectives theirs or the starting point for the remedies?

Consider combining the second and third paragraphs into one.

Thank you for differentiating between school gardens and community gardens in para 2. This differentiation also needs to be noted in Lines 48-50, where you include the research on school gardens (not community gardens) that shows an improvement in academic performance.

I think the statements about "universal consensus" weaken your paper. It's a problematic term, as it tends to whitewash the diversity and dynamism that characterise community spaces and community engagement. Consider revising the two sentences that make reference to this idea.

Line 93 - Please acknowledge that the author of the DIY citizenship term in this sentence (as you do later in the paper)

Method:
Lines 186-7: Please correct this sentence

Line 208: Consider: "shows" (present tense)
Line 209: This limitation, and another that appears on lines 248-9, could be moved to the discussion section - please consider this to help improve the readability of the article.

Line 214: themselves?

Line 218: replace 'but' with 'however'.

Lines 219-222: Rather than 'specific' health implications, consider differentiating these as 'direct' health implications, and those that are the focus of this paper as the "upstream health determinants". This is to strengthen your argument that ultimately this is all about addressing determinants of health.

Results: It is unclear whether you are wanting to draw attention to the differences between motivating factors for joining, and motivating factors for a sustained involvement. The discussion does not delve into this difference.

Line 266: Please correct this sentence (i.e. quote incorporation).

Line 273: Consider replacing "reconnecting with land" to "connecting with nature". Although Angela's quote mentions reconnecting with land, the bulk of the quotes and the discussion points you make later deal with nature connectedness.

Discussion:
Overall, the discussion could be strengthened. There is scope here for the authors to develop their arguments more fully, beyond the format of providing a summary or findings and then concluding with a simple statement about how their findings support, or are supported by, other literature. Is there opportunity to discuss something of significance from interviewing people across the different gardens - as this is an important, defining part of your research design? Or, could you structure the discussion around the motivations for joining and for staying involved?

Conclusion:
Lines 562 on: For improved clarity consider: This may require quantitative measures, robust theoretical consistency, and more effective ... with rich data being collected..."

Thank you for the opportunity to review the second version of this paper.

All the best with your future research in this area.

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.
Unable to assess

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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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