Reviewer’s report

Title: Sitting less at work: A qualitative study of barriers and enablers in organisations of different size and sector

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Reviewer: Katrien De Cocker

Reviewer’s report:

This well-written paper reports findings from focus groups run in different types of working organisations in the UK, around the timely topic of reducing workplace sedentary behaviour (SB). I have some concerns about the work in its current form and believe that the manuscript can be improved before publication.

Title

1. The title suggests that only organisational-level factors will be investigated, while -if I understood correctly- several level factors will be compared between different organisations. Consider an adjusted title please.

2. In addition, it could be more informative to specify which organisational aspects (type, size, 'rules', culture?) will be considered.

Abstract

3. I think it is too strong to say that this is the first study to identify barriers and enablers to sitting less at work as a precursor to intervention development.

4. What is the added value compared to the existing literature? How does this study fill any gaps?

5. What was the base for the pre-defined themes?

6. The results and conclusions sections are rather vague and little informative to the reader. Can you be more specific (What are enablers? What are barriers?) or give some clear implications for practice and further research?

Introduction

7. As stated in the introduction there are other studies looking at factors influencing workplace SB, using similar methods and analyses. The author should define a clear gap in the literature
and rationale for this paper to show why the current study (especially the first aim) and these methods is needed and of added values, especially in the abstract too. I would consider having only the second aim as the main objective of this study?

8. Recent reviews including those of for example Gardner B et al 2016, Shrestha N et al 2018, Hadgraft N et al, 2018 should be considered to be included and described.

9. In 74: why would that then not be useful for intervention development?

10. In 77: ref 19 can also be added to for example perceived loss of productivity, please check this carefully for all references.

11. In 94-95: why is lunch time so important?

12. Was the focus on reducing total sitting time and replacing sitting by standing, or was the focus also on interrupting prolonged sitting?

Methods

11. This section of the manuscript could be strengthened if the authors include a justification for choice of methods. Why qualitative methods? What is the advantage of having used qualitative methods to obtain in-depth information rather than using, for example, a quantitative survey design with a larger sample? In addition, why were focus groups used, rather than e.g. individual interviews?

12. Additional information is needed regarding the sampling frame and population demographics. How and why were these four organisations selected? How representative is the cohort of the population? How many participants were contacted, how many declined? Why was only one 'company' selected for each type of organisation?

13. Was any type of software used for the analyses?

Results

14. Table 1: can you add the number of focus groups in every organisations? And the number of participants in each focus group (was this 4 per focus group?). Why was the number of participants per focus group rather low, why not bigger groups?

15. Table 3: is there a difference in some variable between the 4 organisations. For example: only one women in the small business, only management-level participants in the large corporation… it is known that managers might have different views than other employees. How can this impact the results? Please reflect on this. Should the results be presented in another way?
In addition, how could the results be different if the local authority had no standing desks available? The availability of standing desks could have an impact on their employees view regarding other barriers and enablers.

16. Table 3: it might be useful to the reader to add percentages, in addition make clear that the figures are numbers for rows 4 and more.

17. Table 4: what is the meaning of the 'X'? does this mean the factor is present or absent?

18. ln 236: why is 'nature of work' considered an organisational factor? I believe you can have administration roles or certain tasks requiring intense concentration in every type of organisation? This is not clear to me…

19. ln 259-285: could this also be considered as a concern about what colleagues may think (1.3). Why is this considered to be an organisational factor?

20. ln 303-320: it might be useful to compare this to the following paper in the discussion section: Olsen et al Health Promot J Austr 2018.

21. Can the internal physical environment be interpreted as a true reflection of differences in organizations? For example, not all local authorities will have the same facilities or layout I suppose? Please reflect on this.

Discussion

22. At present the discussion tends to be a summary of the results, rather than an interpretation against previous literature. This is especially through for the second and third paragraphs. In addition, some parts need more in-depshs insights in order to add to the current literature.

23. The conclusions section is a bit vague and general. Can you make it more informative to the reader in terms of implications for practice or suggestions for future research?

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:

Acceptable

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