Reviewer’s report

Title: Sporting programs aimed at inactive population groups in the Netherlands: factors influencing their long-term sustainability in the organized sports setting

Version: 0 Date: 21 Jul 2019

Reviewer: Rainer Kiss

Reviewer's report:

Review: SSMR-D-19-00052

"Sporting programs for inactive population groups: factors influencing their long-term sustainability in the organized sports setting" by Linda Ooms, Mette van Kruijsbergen, Dorine Collard, Chantal Leemrijse, Cindy Veenhof

General comments:

The manuscript investigated possible reasons for the continuation or discontinuation of sport programs in Dutch sports clubs. Authors used semi-structured interviews with representatives from a) local sports clubs and b) the Dutch National Sports Federation to evaluate factors influencing sustainability in the different parties. The paper is well written. However, at some point the information is presented in a less precise way. Authors have the intention to not focus on important findings and seem to add every information they have into the manuscript. Please confer to my detailed comments below.

Abstract:

1. the abstract is well written and summarizes the aim, implementation and, although briefly, the results of the study

Background:

2. Is sports club participation always beneficial in terms of health or health conditions? In my opinion the topic is introduced well but somewhat one-dimensional since sports clubs might have different orientations leading to higher health risks (e.g. competitive sports). Authors might consider adding a few sentences directing this issue.
3. I am interested in what the National Action Plan for Sport and Exercise (NAPSE) exactly is. Could you briefly explain the background/reason for establishing this program in the Netherlands?

4. What might be reasons for not continuing health promotion programs when funding ends?

5. What did the authors expect in regard to sustainability factors? What did they expect to be different in NSF and clubs and what might be similar?

Methods/Data analysis:

6. I am not quite sure how study data was registered. Who organized potential influencing factor into the four main pillars (program design, implementation, organization, environment)? Line 203 states that only 19% of the transcript was cross-checked by another person. What happened if no consent could be obtained? No third vote was involved and only MK and LO tried to reach an agreement?

7. If disagreements appeared in only 19%-checked-scripts, how can you be sure that the remaining 81% were all in agreement regarding the coding?

8. Were the interviewers trained in interview methods and techniques?

9. Could you be more explicit on the interview? Author state that they used a "semi-structured approach" but I'd suggest adding, for instance in the appendix, the interview guide used.

Minor:

- Typo in line 118 "4) factors in de broader community environment"

Results:

10. Results are presented in a very detailed manner. Sometimes too detailed which makes it hard to get the "hard facts" and not get distracted by the quantity of findings. I'd suggest delineating the results and offer a more precise way to follow your results focusing on main facts.
11. Since the main question was to find differences/similarities between FSM and clubs, this information is hard to extract from the results section. Findings obtained from NSF subjects are mixed with findings from sports club subjects.

Minor:
- The direct quotes, e.g. in line 277ff are not necessary in my opinion since they only repeat the statements made in the preceding paragraph
- Line 435-441: no need to have this information in the main text. Please move to the appropriate figure caption.

Discussion:
12. The discussion is well written and summarizes the findings quite well. However, I have similar remarks as already mentioned in #11. It is very hard to understand similarities and differences between FSM and sports clubs. Many information are mixed together and there is no clear separation between both parties. I think somewhat this is due to not mentioning what was expected in the first place (i.e., in the introduction).

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.

No

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.

I am able to assess the statistics
**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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