Reviewer's report

Title: How well do physical activity questions perform? A European cognitive testing study

Version: 1 Date: 10 August 2015

Reviewer: Alexandre Mouton

Reviewer's report:

The paper is well written an address an important issue about PAQs. The cognitive interview approach in an international perspective contribute to the quality and the originality of the paper. However, I address you some recommendations for improvement.

Major Compulsory Revisions
- In your Results section, you refer to some characteristics of the respondents such high-skilled, those who had less structured daily lifes, their employment status. Or, you do not refer to a socio-demographic questioning in the Methods section. This information should be added in this section for a better comprehension of your methodology. Moreover, it is not clear whether you consider somebody as high- or low-skilled. This classification process should also be presented in the Methods section.

Minor Essential Revisions
- In Table 2, you should specify to which PAQ you are referring to for each case example. A skilled-reader will be able to guess which PAQ is presented but it is not clear enough for other readers.

Discretionary Revisions
- In the study sample section (page 6), it would be useful to specify which incentive was provided (financial?) to the participants.
- In the data analysis section (page 7), I would suggest the inclusion of an inter-rater reliability analysis for the data reduction process in order to strengthen the methodological quality of your study.
- In the Results section (pages 7-11), it could be interesting to present the prevalence of the difficulties encountered by respondents (number of citations per problem presented). In fact, it is sometimes difficult to make the distinction between minor and major problems using only "some respondents" or "many respondents" statements. In this way, the reader would better understand the choice you have made for your suggestions of adaptations to improve PAQs and make them more suitable for the respondents.

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