Reviewer’s report

Title: Company size, work-home interference, and well-being of self-employed entrepreneurs

Version: 0 Date: 27 Sep 2017

Reviewer: C Vanroelen

Reviewer's report:

General comments
This study regarding the quality of work life of self-employed (maybe this terminology could be included in the title?), touches upon a less studied domain of occupational health and well-being research. Therefore, this report on self-collected data in a convenience sample of self-employed has its merits. The weaknesses of this study are the low number of observations and - related to the former - the highly descriptive nature of the results. Fully aware of the limitations of data, I believe still improvements to the manuscript are possible. Main advices I would give are the following (most of them are described in more detail below): (1) focussing the background section on entrepreneurs/self-employed; (2) reducing the in-text results description and developing some kind of overview table(s), clearly describing the variables and their associations; (3) maybe the analyses can be made more "explanatory" by looking for latent concepts of work life risk factors or typologies of self-employed?; (4) maybe more information on the qualitative data that seemed to be collected can be given?; (5) the authors could develop a stronger policy agenda in the discussion (based upon their own results and findings from the literature).

Abstract
Make sure that is clear in the background section that you are interested in studying 'entrepreneurs' and not employees of SME's. More information (N, location, …) of the second study in shop keepers is needed in the abstract.

Background
In their background section, the authors are conflating - in my opinion - two related but different topics in quality of work research: work quality of workers in SME's and the work quality of (small) self-employed. As the data they report on is about self-employed, I believe their background section needs to focus more on that group (instead of workers from SME's). Currently more and more empirical research on self-employed and their work quality is becoming available. The authors should make a brief overview of the state-of-the-art and embed their research objectives in that state-of-the-art. The end of the paragraph (final page of background) belongs more to methods, study design. I suggest the authors to transfer that part to a more structured methodology section. Methodology
Given the relatively complex study design (involving 2 separate studies), the authors should pay thorough attention to the description and justification of the study design. Part of this information is now in the background section and should be transferred to methodology. Although no census data on self-employed may be available, I believe the authors should do more efforts in describing their sample compared to relevant reference populations in terms of socio-demographic characteristics. Readers need more knowledge on how selective this sample is. Second - and related to the former, the authors should sub-divide the methodology section in a number of sub-sections: study design; indicators/instruments; analytic procedure. General descriptive information is lacking when the scales and other variables are introduced. Maybe this can be resolved by referring to the tables in the results section. In these tables an N for each indicator can be added. There is some inconsistency throughout the manuscript of the exact N of both samples (140 or 135?; 100 or 99?). Also provide some information on missing values.

Revise/rephrase paragraph between lines 43 and
53. Also, I am not sure whether the sentence "This is a platform ..." (line 17-20) is correct. Results Under the paragraph regarding motivation, suddenly the authors speak of 459; 99; 82 and 68 responses. It is unclear how these relate to the sample size of the study mentioned earlier. Although the analyses are descriptive and the number of observations is low, the paper could improve by a somewhat more systematic reporting of the results. The authors should consider summarizing the univariate results and the associations observed in one or two tables, clearly showing numbers, relative distributions and significance tests. Some of the items described appear to be items belonging to item scales (for example those reported in tables 1 and 2). Why are the authors considering them separately and not making summed scales (after testing there dimensionality)? If the descriptive results are summarized in a table, maybe their in-text description can be shortened. This could maybe give more space for discussing qualitative results (the paragraph on actions to be taken). Possibly these results were richer than what is reported in the manuscript. Discussion The discussion connects the findings of this study with the broader findings in the literature. Indeed - as the authors also note in their paper - generally these findings are consistent with the literature. This is in a way a kind of validation for their own results, who's main weakness is of course the low number of observations. On the other hand, it also raises the question regarding the innovative contribution of this paper. The authors should highlight better how they think their study contributes to the existing literature. The discussion could also benefit from a more developed policy agenda: which concrete measures could contribute to the problems signalled by this study?

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An article of importance in its field

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I have regular contacts with the authors and we had some scientific collaboration in the past.

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