Reviewer's report

Title: Demographic, health-related, and work-related factors associated with body mass index and body fat percentage among workers at six Connecticut manufacturing companies across different age groups: A cohort study.

Version: 2
Date: 28 May 2015
Reviewer: Jewel Gausman

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The authors measure social support with the Job Content Questionnaire to assess supervisory and peer support. The literature on social support discusses different types of social support (i.e. informational, instrumental, emotional, appraisal). Did the questions selected focus on a specific type of social support? If so, it would be helpful to understand the authors’ decisions in choosing the questions used to assess social support from the Job Content Questionnaire and what types of social support they attempted to measure. Ensuring that this is clear to the reader becomes especially important when examining the statistical models in which these responses are combined and dichotomized into one variable for analysis. (Lines 193-194)

2. The authors include a wide range of very interesting variables in their analysis, however, given the number and range of variables, the manuscript would be much improved positioning it within a theory or theories that explains/contextualizes the hypothesized mechanistic relationship between the variables of interest and the outcomes, and justifies the use of the variables included. For example, the authors use the decision latitude variable from Karasek’s Demand-Control Model of workplace stress, however, they provide limited discussion of why this variable is important, and how it fits into the underlying relationship that they are attempting to explore between work stress and BMI and BFP. Additionally, the variables included on procedural norms and civility are very interesting, but I’m not sure how they fit independently into the theoretical model. It would be helpful to have this bigger picture described in more depth to ensure that these pieces fit coherently together. (Paragraph beginning with lines 199-200).

Discretionary Revisions

1. Was the Stress in General Scale validated with this population? Has it been used in a similar population before (184)?

2. The paragraph beginning with line 94 could be strengthened by providing more specific discussion of the variables and specific pathways that will be examined in the study to improve the overall flow and coherence of the manuscript.
3. I appreciated the discussion of the double burden of women’s responsibilities in childcare responsibilities and work, and the resulting challenges associated with self-care. I thought that the authors did a nice job of integrating some discussion of gender differences in their discussion of BMI and BFP in the introduction as well as in the results. The authors could consider strengthening the discussion of the different mechanisms that operate to cause the observed patterning by gender. Additionally, the suggestions about interventions appropriate for individuals with limited time because of childcare responsibilities is fairly weak and could be expanded upon and linked back to the study population more specifically. (lines 367-372)

**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