

Interventions

Workplace health promotion

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Challenges and pitfalls of designing, conducting, and evaluating web-based interventions

D. Reis*, D. Lehr¹, H. Freund², T. Lischetzke³

¹Leuphana University of Lüneburg, Lüneburg, ²Tabor University, Marburg, ³University of Koblenz-Landau, Landau, Germany

Main Abstract Content: State of the art: With the emergence of web-based interventions in the field of Organizational Behavior, we have to pay attention to methodological challenges and pitfalls of designing, conducting, and evaluating intervention studies. Issues of appropriate design and adequate evaluation should be considered essential for both effectiveness of the intervention and robustness of the findings.

Contributions: Based on our pre-registered study with a randomized controlled design (N=62), we demonstrate challenges concerning the design of an intervention aiming to reduce perseverative thinking as the primary outcome in employees. Also, we report issues related to the recruitment and compliance of participants. We show how researcher degrees of freedom, exploratory as opposed to confirmatory analyses, (unintentional) p-hacking, and reporting bias might threaten the robustness and replicability of our findings and bloat effect sizes.

Research/Practical Implications: Given that web-based interventions are promising and cost-effective approaches to fostering occupational health, we need to ensure that the implemented programs do not fail to come up to expectations raised by the research.

Value: In this presentation, based on real study and data we demonstrate the most vulnerable points in the design and evaluation of intervention studies and suggest alternative strategies that might help to enhance the quality of intervention research.

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