Author's response to reviews

Title: Growth factor concentrations and their placental mRNA expression are modulated in gestational diabetes mellitus: possible interactions with macrosomia

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Editor-in-Chief
“BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth”

Subject: Submission of the 3rd revised version of our article entitled, “Growth factor concentrations and their placental mRNA expression are modulated in gestational diabetes mellitus: possible interactions with macrosomia” by Grissa et al.

BMC Pregnancy & Childbirth MS ID : 3730541142459370

Dear sir,

We have revised thoroughly the above-mentioned MS as per instructions of the two referees. Please also find attached herewith the “point-by-point answers” for you kind perusal and consideration.

We have respected the deadline for the submission of the revised MS.

Our work has not been neither published nor submitted for publication and it has not been sanctioned by any editorial committee. All the experiments have been conducted as per European ethical guidelines and the protocols were approved by the Regional Ministry Ethical Committee. All the authors of the article have given their consent for submission of the same for publication in the “BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth”.

We hope that the 3rd revised version of MS will find a suitable place in your esteemed journal.

Sincerely yours,

Naim Khan
Professeur N. A. KHAN

Point-by-point answers / rebuttals to the referees’ comments

MS: “Growth factor concentrations and their placental mRNA expression are modulated in gestational diabetes mellitus: possible interactions with macrosomia” by Grissa et al.

Reviewer: Jens Fuglsang

The reviewer, at first hand, appreciated our study by mentioning that we have revised the MS accordingly and we have implemented previous suggestions; however, he asked for few corrections which have been added into the revised MS and whose answers are given as follows:

Major comments:

- The referee pointed out that we have introduced multiple regression analysis; however, the method description contained grammatical flaws and the information appeared twice. He also asked us to define the terms (Table 3) like “inferior born” or “superior born” (decimals are sometimes given as x 10-3 and sometimes with decimals. Are p-values for the analyses given?), etc.

  We have now re-checked the MS for the grammatical mistakes and we have corrected them. Secondly, we have fused the “statistical analysis” section with the “multiple regression analysis section,” and we have deleted the sentences which contained double information. We have also corrected the terms, in the Table 3, like “inferior born” or “superior born” which have been replaced by “lower bound” and “upper bound”. The decimals are no more present. The P values have also been added on the Table 3.

- The reviewer also mentioned that the discussion section contained many of the proposed clarifications. However, some of these appear to be unexplained and somewhat out of context, e.g. p.9, line 9 from below.

  In the revised version of the MS, we have deleted the line 9 from page 9 as per referee’s suggestion. We have re-checked the paragraph of the MS.

- The reviewer asked that the section on p. 10 on growth hormones was not straightforward, and it was difficult to the reader to see whether the authors referred to pituitary or placental GH in many of the sentences. Also table 3 does not clarify this issue. Instead, the results section (p.7-8) appears very clear on this topic.

  Now, on page 9, we have now clarified the term GH as “pituitary GH”. In the last sentence of the legend of Table 3, we have also added a sentence as “GH should be considered as pituitary-GH”.


Reviewer: K.S. Joseph

The referee looked into the comments which were initially raised by Dr Lindsay and he stated that we had provided the pertinent reference on the contradictory findings and we had also performed the regression analysis. As a part of **minor essential revisions**, he pointed out that we did not mention the correlation and regression analyses in the Results or Discussion sections.

- In the revised MS, we have now mentioned the Table 3 in the last part of the Discussion section. We have also added a sentence in the last part of the Results section on Table 2 and Table 3.

He further suggested that regression analysis could be improved. Hence, he suggested the followings:

- The outcome variable that should be modeled should be birth weight in grams (not kilograms) and the results will not change though Table 2 will become easier to read and interpret. We have now added the results in grams in the revised Table which now appears Table 3.

- The reviewer also suggested that we can add the infants’ sex (male or female) in the regression model. Hence, we would like to state that we tried to introduce this parameter into the regression line; however, this variable was eliminated as a function of calculations during stepwise regression. We, therefore, can state that infants’ sex does not significantly influence the birth weight.

- As per suggestion of the reviewer, we have now rectified the terms like “confidence interval” and “lower bound” and “upper bound” etc.. in the Table 3.

- We have rectified the terms like “women” in place of “ladies” etc.. as suggested by the referee. We have also replaced the term diabetic by GDM in MS as per suggestion of the referee.