Author's response to reviews

Title: Development and tracking of central patterns of subcutaneous fat of rural South African children aged 5 to 15 years: Ellisras Longitudinal Study

Authors:

Kotsedi D Monyeki (dmonyeki@yahoo.com)
Han CG Kemper (berthankemper@zonnet.nl)
Phuti PJ Makgae (pjmakgae@yahoo.com)

Version: 4 Date: 14 October 2009

Author's response to reviews: see over
Author’s response to reviewers

MS number: 1305689340251359

Title: Development and tracking of central patterns of subcutaneous fat of rural South African children aged 5 to 15 years: Ellisras Longitudinal Study

Authors: Kotsedi D Monyeki: dmonyeki@yahoo.com
Han CG Kemper: berthankemper@zonnet.nl
Phuthi J Makgae: pjmakgae@yahoo.com

Date: 6 October 2009

In response to the Reviewer’s suggestion, I resubmit the manuscript text for consideration by the BMC Pediatrics Journals. The text covers the answers to all the Reviewer’s questions raised in the revision. Thank you for all the comments and judgment. The opinions were really helpful to eliminate misunderstanding and several major flows and to make the manuscript more accurate and valuable. I am grateful for the opportunity to reconsider our work for publication. I hope the revised manuscript will come up to the Reviewers expectations.

Reviewer # 1: Dr Vincent W Jaddoe

Their revision letter is quite general and lack specific answers. However, the manuscript has been improved. Although the authors state that they have contacted a native English speaker or writer, the current version is still not written well. This is a major problem for presenting their results. Since their results are of interest for BMC Pediatrics, this should be solved.

- Thank you for acknowledging the improvement of the manuscript and the interest of the content of the manuscript to the BMC Pediatric. In view of the contrast between the two reviewers about the English, we kept the manuscript as it is since no specific indications were given by reviewer 1.

They did not address the following issues:
1). Tracking of BMI, they refer to another report which gives prevalence rates for stunting and wasting. However, for the present paper information about the tracking of BMI might be of interest independent of the cross sectional analysis.

- The concern has been address adequately in the discussion section.
“Similar to the current analysis, we found a significant tracking of body mass index for these children (preschool children (B=0.6 (95% CI 0.6-0.7) and for primary school children (B=0.6 (95%CI 0.5-0.6) [37].”

2). No multiple missing value imputation was performed
   - The concern was adequately addressed in the results section. Furthermore, the GEE tracking analysis method can be employed when there are missing values in the measurements of the longitudinal data.

“To examine the effects caused by the subjects who were absent, we compared skinfold thickness with the paired follow up subjects during each period of measurement. There was no significant difference (p<0.05) between subjects of the same age who were currently in the study and the drop-outs. Thus, dropout at this stage seems to have been random.”

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
   - In view of the contrast between the two reviewers about the English, we kept the manuscript as it is since no specific indications were given by reviewer 1.

Statistical review: Yes and I have assessed the statistics in my report

Declaration of competing interest: I declare that I have no competing interest.

Reviewer # 2: Dr Renate Horejsi

Discretionary Revision

Page numbers would be helpful
   - Page numbers have been inserted.

Abstract: Background first line: Plural “central patterns”
   - Done
   “Individuals grow and accumulate central patterns of body fat into the diseases they will suffer from as older adults”

Background: again “central patterns”
   - Done
   “The need to elicit the development and tracking of central patterns of body fat from younger age into adolescent remains to be explored.”

Line 15: “adolescence?”
   - Done
“The accumulation of central patterns of body fat of Ellisras children starts in childhood and adolescence spurt with Ellisras girls acquiring more than boys over time.”

Line 16: “secondary sex characteristics” instead of secondary changes.
  - Done

“Adolescence (start at 10 years for girls and 12 years for boys) is initiated by the first appearance of the secondary sex characteristics or pubertal changes [9].”

Line 19: again “central patterns”
  - Done

“In view of the rising public health problems of chronic diseases of lifestyle in adulthood, the need to elicit the development and tracking of central patterns of body fat from younger age and beyond is compelling.”

Discussion: no plural “s” Singular “Discussion”
  - Done

Line 18: again central patterns
  - Done

“The development of central patterns of body fat in the Ellisras children started in both childhood and adolescent spurt and was consistent with findings from other studies [5, 8, 11-13, 19, 28-30].”

Next page, last paragraph “exhibit”, no s
  - Done

“In previous report, the current sample was reported to exhibit high prevalence of stunting and wasting particularly at an older age while thinness (preschool children ranged from 39.4 to 42.6% and primary school children ranged from 23.7 to 30.0%) was a major public health problem compared to overweight (pre school children ranged from 0 to 3.9% and primary school children ranged from 0 to 15.5%) [16, 17, 37].”

Next page, first paragraph: at the “gluteal-femoral region”
  - Done

“The android pattern is central or visceral and the gynoid pattern is peripheral and mostly notable at the gluteal-femoral region.”

Same page, last paragraph: instead of “anatomic location” use “anatomic well defined body sites”
  - Done

“The onset of puberty affects different anatomic well defined body sites of fat differently [28].”

Conclusion: again “central patterns”
  - Done
“The accumulation of central patterns of body fat for Ellisras children starts in childhood and adolescent stage”

Line 7: “how healthy these children are and their lifestyle”
  • Done

“Investigation of nutritional intake and physical activity patterns over time will shed light on how healthy these children are and their lifestyle is.”

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of English: Acceptable
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician
Declaration: I declare that I have no competing interest.