Reviewer’s report

Title: Nationwide shifts in the double burden of overweight and underweight in Vietnamese adults in the period 2000 - 2005: two national nutrition surveys.

Version: 1 Date: 15 June 2010

Reviewer: MMH Khan

Reviewer’s report:

The article only presents the situation of underweight, overweight and obesity by sex, rural-urban place of residence, ecological regions, and age groups in a descriptive manner. I have found several limitations. In general, this article needs more attention regarding e.g. variable selection, methodology, statistical analysis, discussion, and writing.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Background:

The section is inadequate and is not well-structured. For instance, some more texts are necessary to highlight public health consequences of underweight, overweight and obesity.

Methods:

1. This section is short and should be elaborated.

2. Some essential information is missing. For instance, the response rate is missing for both surveys. How many subjects were excluded e.g. for pregnancy, and extreme BMI?

3. How did they select variables? Why are variables like education, marital status, number of children, and income/wealth index missing? Why they did not consider the techniques of multivariable analysis (e.g. multivariable multinomial logistic regression analysis)? P-values are also missing which give us the idea whether the difference between male-female, rural-urban, age groups and ecological regions are significant or not.

4. Ethical issues are ignored.

Results:

I already mentioned that stratified analysis in a descriptive manner is not enough. For instance, the association of some variables with underweight and overweight might be insignificant in multivariable analysis. Therefore, this section should add some more results based on multivariable statistical analysis.

Discussion:
1. Some findings need to be discussed more. For instance, why women have more underweight prevalence than men? Is there any role of gender discrimination? Why is the prevalence of overweight higher in urban areas as compared to rural areas? Is this scenario related to overall development strategies, lifestyle strategies, and income? Is there any influence of social perceptions and cultural practices on BMI?

2. Nothing is written about intervention/prevention strategies to control/reduce the rising prevalence of overweight and obesity among adults in Vietnam. Although the situation of double burden of nutrition makes the intervention strategies difficult, at least some of the suitable strategies should be mentioned.

3. Authors reported the estimated number of overweight cases (page 8 in discussion section) and underweight cases (page 10). Are the estimated overweight cases for the age group of 25-64 years? Are these cases for the whole country? I am also concerned about the methodologies of estimation. Particularly the method of estimation should be written clearly somewhere in the method section.

4. Limitations of the study and results are not written.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Some grammatical mistakes are found and therefore should be checked carefully to improve the quality of English and readability.

2. References are written in two styles. Some references are written as superscripts (please check reference 15 in page 6 and 21 in page 11).

3. The 2nd paragraph of page 10 which explains regional disparities of poverty need to be referenced.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests