Author's response to reviews

Title: A qualitative study of the determinants of dieting and non-dieting approaches in overweight/obese Australian adults

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Version: 2 Date: 28 November 2012

Author's response to reviews: see over
28th November 2012

Editor-in-Chief
BMC Public Health

Dear editor,

Please find attached a revised copy of the manuscript entitled: *A qualitative study of the determinants of dieting and non-dieting approaches in overweight/obese Australian adults*, which the co-authors and I are resubmitting for consideration for publication in BMC Public Health as an original research article. The data reported in the present research were collected in accordance with the ethical standards set forth by Queensland University of Technology’s University Human Research Ethics Committee (UHREC). All authors have contributed to the paper in a meaningful way and have reviewed the final version of the paper.

We thank the reviewers for their efforts and comments and believe the revisions have significantly improved the paper. We have made extensive changes to the background literature and results section and have addressed all comments from the reviewers, with the exception of three discretionary revisions. We have also attempted to adhere to the RATS guidelines as closely as possible by including information in the manuscript to address these guidelines. We have provided a point-by-point response to the concerns of the reviewers in the pages that follow.

If you have any questions on this matter, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Leske
Manuscript revisions

Background, first paragraph, second sentence: We thank the reviewer for their clarification on Australia’s obesity rates and have amended this sentence to indicate that Australia is one of the highest OECD countries. We have also updated the prevalence estimates of overweight/obesity in Australia in this sentence.

Background, first paragraph, third sentence: We have replaced “is associated with several health risks” with “increases the risk of” in the third sentence of this paragraph.

Background, first paragraph, third sentence: We have inserted the word “fortunately” at the beginning of the fourth sentence in this paragraph.

Background, second paragraph: We have inserted this paragraph to briefly introduce the public and clinical health approach to treatment of overweight and obesity and preface the more extensive discussion below recommended by reviewer 3.

Background, third to eighth paragraph: In accordance with the suggestions of reviewer 3, we expanded the background literature, created subheadings, and located literature situated within a public health/population health framework. These paragraphs (inclusive of the third and the eighth) have been significantly revised.

Background, ninth and last paragraph, second sentence: Apostrophe after individuals removed.

Background, ninth and last paragraph, fifth sentence: “theory” changed to “model”.

Methods, data collection, first paragraph, first sentence: We have listed the specific name of the ethics committee which granted approval as per the editors’ request.

Methods, data collection, second paragraph, second sentence: “the” inserted between “grounded in” and “data”.

Methods, data collection, second paragraph; fourth, fifth and sixth sentences: These sentences have been inserted here (moved from “participants” section) to describe the basis
of theoretical sampling as requested by reviewer 1. We also reworded the fourth sentence in accordance with reviewer 1’s suggestion that it was not very clear.

**Methods, data collection, second paragraph, sixth sentence:** “rejecting” changed to “rejected” as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

**Methods, data collection, third paragraph, second sentence:** We have replaced the term “semi-structured interview” with “guided discussion format” and a reference in response to reviewer 3’s concerns about using the semi-structured interview in a grounded theory study. This appears to be the terminology and methodology used by grounded theorists and the guided questions appear to be the same as a semi-structured interview.

**Methods, participants, first paragraph, fourth sentence:** Description of theoretical sampling deleted as included in data collection section.

**Methods, participants, first paragraph, fourth sentence:** “six class I obese” changed to “five” as numbers in each category did not tally up to 21 participants (data reviewed to confirm this).

**Methods, participants, first paragraph, last sentence:** Description of theoretical sampling deleted as included in data collection section.

**Methods, data analysis, first paragraph, fourth sentence:** The word “causality” removed and replaced by “the influences between each of the concepts” as per reviewer 1’s suggestions.

**Methods, data analysis, first paragraph, sixth sentence:** “Codes and” added at beginning of sentence.

The results section was revised in several places to 1) reduce generalisation, 2) acknowledge overlap between dieting and non-dieting participants in some instances, and 3) describe and interpret the quotes in more detail:
Results, first paragraph, third sentence: “primarily” inserted between “approach” and “focused”.

Results, first paragraph, fourth sentence: Sentence inserted here to indicate that there was overlap between dieters and non-dieters as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Results, Focus of approach, first paragraph, first sentence: “for some adults” inserted at end of sentence.

Results, Focus of approach, first paragraph, second sentence: “along a continuum” inserted in between “ranged” and “from a focus” as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Results, Focus of approach, first paragraph, third sentence: “Most” inserted at beginning of sentence as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Results, Focus of approach, first paragraph, fourth sentence: “experienced” has been replaced by “reported on” as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Results, Focus of approach, second paragraph, second and third sentences: A more detailed introduction to the quote provided.

Results, Focus of approach, fourth paragraph: A quote of a person lying on the middle of this continuum (focus on weight/focus on health) has been inserted as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Results, Focus of approach, sixth paragraph: A more detailed introduction to the next quote [“it (dieting) certainly taught”] was provided.

Results, Focus of approach, eighth paragraph, second sentence: A sentence inserted here to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote [“I definitely like”].

Results, Focus of approach, tenth paragraph, second sentence: A sentence inserted here to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote [“I think focusing on”].

Results, Focus of approach, eleventh paragraph: a quote was deleted here as per reviewer 1’s suggestion about its duplication later on in the article.
Results, Attributions about dieting failure, first paragraph, first sentence: “appeared” inserted between “which” and “differentiate”. End of sentence also amended to “dieting and non-dieting approaches for some adults”.

Results, Attributions about dieting failure, first paragraph, second sentence: “some” inserted at beginning of sentence. A third sentence also inserted in this paragraph to introduce the quote in more detail.

Results, Attributions about dieting failure, third paragraph, first sentence: “sometimes” inserted between “failures were” and “attributed”. A second sentence also inserted in this paragraph to introduce the quote in more detail.

Results, Attributions about dieting failure, fifth paragraph, second sentence: “some” inserted at beginning of sentence. A third sentence also inserted in this paragraph to introduce the quote in more detail.

Results, Attitudes towards established diets, first paragraph, first sentence: “appeared to” inserted between “which” and “determine” and “for some adults” inserted at the end of the sentence.

Results, Attitudes towards established diets, first paragraph, second sentence: “the numerous diets on offer” inserted between “regardless of” and “contradictions in the industry”.

Results, Attitudes towards established diets, third paragraph, first and second sentences: Both sentences rewritten to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote.

Results, Attitudes towards established diets, fifth paragraph: An introduction and quote inserted here to provide an example of a participant lying in the middle of this continuum (dieter advocating for a non-dieting approach) as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.
Results, Personal autonomy, first paragraph, second sentence: “some” inserted and “their decisions” changed to “this decision” at the end of the sentence. Sentences four and five were also inserted here to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote.

Results, Personal autonomy, second paragraph, first sentence: Weight Watchers capitalised.

Results, Personal autonomy, third paragraph, first sentence: This sentence broken up into two sentences and extended to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote.

Results, Personal autonomy, fourth paragraph, first sentence: “diet kitchen at university” changed to “food preparation area used by nurses in training” as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Results, Personal autonomy, fifth paragraph, first sentence: This sentence broken up into two sentences and extended to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote.

Results, Personal autonomy, seventh paragraph, first sentence: “in order to comply with” replaced “at”. A second sentence inserted to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote.

Results, Personal autonomy, ninth paragraph, first sentence: This sentence reworked in several places and a second sentence added to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote.

Results, Personal autonomy, eleventh paragraph, first sentence: “sometimes” inserted between “changes,” and “appeared”. A second sentence inserted to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote.

Results, Personal autonomy, thirteenth paragraph, first sentence: A sentence inserted here to provide a more detailed introduction to the quote. “Instead, a” inserted at the beginning of the next sentence.

Results, Perceived knowledge and self-efficacy with approach, first paragraph, second sentence: “seem to” inserted between “didn’t” and “feel”. “rely on” and “that had previously
worked for them” inserted into latter half of sentence. We have tried to make this sentence as clear as possible as per reviewer 1’s suggestion that it was not clear how this links in with the discussion sentence which reads: “…while adults who were not confident in their ability to make their own…” (see discussion, sixth paragraph, second sentence).

Results, Perceived knowledge and self-efficacy with approach, third paragraph, first sentence: First sentence rewritten to introduce the quote in more detail. A second sentence added to achieve the same purposes.

Results, Time perspective, first paragraph, first sentence: “looked to” inserted between “also” and “contribute”. “some adults suggested” also replaced “diets were often chosen” at the beginning of the next sentence.

Results, Time perspective, first paragraph, third sentence: “were” replaced with “could be”, and this sentence also extended. The end of the fourth sentence after “maintenance” also deleted.

Results, Time perspective, third paragraph: A quote and introduction provided here to give an example of a participant who fell in the middle of this continuum (non-dieting approach happened overnight) as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Results, Time perspective, fifth paragraph, first sentence: “appeared to be” replaced “were”, “were” and “by some adults” also inserted.

Results, Time perspective, fifth paragraph, second sentence: “was” replaced by “seemed to be”.

Results, Time perspective, fifth paragraph, third sentence: This sentence deleted and replaced by two sentences to introduce quote.

Results, Time perspective, seventh paragraph: This new paragraph inserted to provide an example of negative perceptions about the long-term nature of “lifestyle change”.
Results, Perceived identity, first paragraph, second sentence: ‘overweight’ person inserted among the identity descriptors.

Results, Perceived identity, first paragraph, third sentence: “and the use of different labels” inserted at the end of this sentence. Fourth sentence inserted to introduce quote in more detail.

Results, Perceived identity, third paragraph: “If adults did lose weight” replaced by “for some dieters” at the beginning of the sentence. Two more sentences inserted here to introduce quote in more detail.

Results, Perceived identity, fifth paragraph: Two sentences here to introduce quote illustrating participant making the transition in identity.

Discussion, second paragraph, sixth sentence: “study” inserted between “grounded theory” and “of bloggers” as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, third paragraph, first sentence: “may have” and “some participants”” inserted as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, third paragraph, second sentence: “some” and “may” inserted as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, third paragraph, fourth sentence: “may” inserted as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, third paragraph, fifth sentence: “may” inserted as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, fourth paragraph, first sentence: “also predicted” replaced by “appeared to influence” as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, fourth paragraph, second sentence: “these attitudes” replaced “and” to create two sentences instead of the initial combined sentence. “With diets” also inserted after “persevering”.
Discussion, fourth paragraph, seventh sentence: This sentence extended to describe what the fat acceptance community can provide support for. Another sentence also added following this to provide an explanation of how this community could support both dieters and non-dieters. Both as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, fifth paragraph, second sentence: “have reported being” replaced “are” as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, fifth paragraph, third sentence: “also” deleted and “and reported” deleted. “Diets” changed to “diet” at end of sentence.

Discussion, fifth paragraph, fourth sentence: “some” inserted in between “that” and “adults” to avoid generalisation as per reviewer 1’s suggestion. “In the process conforming” removed and “based on the” inserted to add clarity to the sentence.

Discussion, fifth paragraph, fifth sentence: A reference inserted at the end of this sentence as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, fifth paragraph, sixth sentence: “FatOSphere” changed to “Fatosphere” in both instances as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, fifth paragraph, seventh sentence: “Unfortunately” deleted at beginning of sentence. Two sentences also added at the end of this sentence to relate the personal autonomy construct to Self-Determination Theory and provide a definition of the construct as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, sixth paragraph, second sentence: “diets” changed to “dieting plans” at the end of the sentence. A sentence added at the end of this paragraph to relate the self-efficacy construct back to Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory.

Discussion, eight paragraph, first sentence: “preceded” replaced with “appeared to precede” near the end of this sentence.
Discussion, eight paragraph, second sentence: “an” inserted before “obsession”, which was also changed from “obsessiveness”.

Discussion, eight paragraph, fifth sentence: “may have” inserted after (that of a healthy person) and “some” inserted after “non-dieting approach in” as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, eight paragraph, seventh sentence: This sentence inserted to discuss further the reasons why the old self is protective as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, eight paragraph, eighth sentence: “some” added after “suggested that” to avoid generalisation as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, eight paragraph, ninth sentence: “can” replaced by “may” and “can” replaced by “and may”. “, and can grow stronger all the time” also deleted at the end of this sentence in accordance with reviewer 1’s comment.

Discussion, ninth paragraph, second sentence: “convenience sampling and” replaced by “participant”, “into the study” deleted, and “bias” changed to “biases”. We misused the term convenience sampling here.

Discussion, ninth paragraph, ninth sentence: This sentence inserted to refer readers to two recent qualitative syntheses describing weight management decisions as per reviewer 1’s suggestion.

Discussion, tenth paragraph: This paragraph inserted to address reviewer 3’s suggestion that we should look at explaining the theory to emerge from the data and its implications for public and population health policy and practice as per reviewer 3’s suggestion.

Author contributions, third sentence: “analysis of the data” inserted as a contribution of X-YH in accordance with triangulation between all authors (see top of pg. 11).
Methods, data collection: We decided not to discuss whether there were any differences between participants who were interviewed face-to-face and those who were interviewed over the phone as there were no noticeable differences when interviewed.

Methods, participants: We decided not to include a table summarising participants’ characteristics, including how they were interviewed (telephone versus face-to-face), BMIs, whether they considered themselves a dieter or a non-dieter, etc.

Results, illustrative quotes: We chose not to incorporate into quotes participants’ BMI and whether they were a dieter or non-dieter.