Reviewer's report

Title: Physical activity, screen time and obesity status in a nationally representative sample of Maltese youth with international comparisons

Version: 3 Date: 23 April 2014

Reviewer: Leandro Rezende

Reviewer's report:

The authors have made an effort to address the points made in the original reviewers report. There have been changes made to improve the report. However, there are some remaining issues that require modification.

Major Compulsory Revisions:

Abstract:

- The rationale presented in the abstract is not the same as the one in the introduction. I suggest that authors include the one presented in the introduction in the abstract.

Introduction:

- The 2nd paragraph is still confuse and presents different concepts and ideas together. Please review this paragraph.

- I still do not think that the comparison of physical activity and screen-viewing levels between countries is an original contribution of the paper. However, if the authors fell this a very valuable part of the results, even though it was not an objective systematically review the literature, a more reliable and transparent description of the search strategy (descriptors, search date, database), selection, eligibility criteria and data extraction should be described in the methods section. The paragraph presented in the methods (Line 140-142) is too lack of understanding of how review was performed.

Methods:

Results:

- Line 104 – the response rate presented by the authors (80%) is not based on the number of children that provided completed data (n=811), according to the abstract. I suggest the author to include the response rate based on the sample that complete data (811/1126 = 72%). Additionally, the authors could present the response based on the weekend activities (772/1126 = 69%) once those data presented a lower %.

- Line 165 – please explain how significantly higher socioeconomic status score
affect the estimates presented in the study.

Discussion:

- Line 239 – the phrase “As concluded in a recent review by Wilk ….” Present arguments contradictory than the 2nd paragraph. I suggest to remove or reformulate this phrase.

Minor Essential Revisions:

- Double check the sample size in the abstract (n=1124);

- Line 71 – the phrase is not connected with the idea presented in the paragraph.

- Line 77 0 change “incidence” by “prevalence”.

- Line 83 and 84 – physical activity and sedentary time are not rates ("A measure of the frequency of occurrence of a phenomenon. In epidemiology, demography, and vital statistics, a rate is an expression of the frequency with which an event occurs in a defined population in a specified period of time" – Last Dictionary). A suggest to change by "physical activity level" and “high sedentary time”

- Line 87 – When the author uses “In this study” seems that is still referent to the pilot study presented in the paragraph before. I suggest including “In the present study, we systematically ..”

- Line 399 and 435– the reference is duplicate. Please review it and not complete information’s.

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

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests