Reviewer’s report

Title: The Role of Early Life Factors in The Development of Ethnic Differences in Growth and Overweight in Preschool children: A Prospective Birth Cohort

Version: 2 Date: 30 May 2014

Reviewer: Juan C C Aristizabal

Reviewer’s report:

The authors imputed a large percentage of values (see attachment, last page). Most likely, the imputed data affect the results and the statistical regression models.

For example, they imputed the Father’s BMI in 43% of Turkish people, 59% Moroccans, 48% Cape Verdeans, 56% Antillean/Surinameses and 30% Surinamese/Hindustani. For the variable Difference in BMI between birth and six months they imputed the data in 39% of Turkish people, 44% Moroccans, 47% of Cape Verdeans, 42% Antillean/Surinameses and 51% Surinamese/Hindustania. Notably, these variables included in the regression models, partially explain the ethnic differences on the prevalence of overweight in preschool children.

My opinion is that the statistical analysis and the regression models should be run without the imputed data. This high proportion of computer generated data are not real and may not represent people living conditions. More importantly, the results of this study may have implications on public policies affecting people welfare.