Author's response to reviews

Title: Health, poverty and cognitive function in pre-school children: a cohort study in a middle income urban context

Authors:

Darci N Santos (darci@ufba.br)
Ana Marlucia O Assis (amos@ufba.br)
Ana Cecilia S Bastos (cecilana@uol.com.br)
Leticia M Santos (marquesleticia@hotmail.com)
Carlos Antonio S T Santos (carlosateles@yahoo.com.br)
Agostino Strina (strina@ufba.br)
Matildes S Prado (matildesprado@hotmail.com)
Naomar M Almeida-Filho (naomar@ufba.br)
Laura C Rodrigues (laura.rodrigues@lshtm.ac.uk)
Mauricio L Barreto (mauricio@ufba.br)

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Author's response to reviews:

Dr Annabel Phillips
Senior Assistant Editor
BMC-series Journals
BioMed Central

Dear Anabel

Following John T Cacioppo’s review, we agree that we must be careful in inferring causal claims from the associations we found.

The conceptual model, the longitudinal study design and the statistical modeling applied gave us the opportunity to examine the relative contributions of both proximal and distal risk factors on child cognitive development and to identify associations that may lead to a better understanding of the direct and indirect determinants. However, we must consider the very real limitations of an observational study and that analysis and interpretation of data following a predefined conceptual model is a complex exercise and one in which alternative explanations are often possible.

We have therefore shortened the introduction of the paper, and have also acknowledged that some methodological limitations could be responsible for some of the results found in our study.

Yours sincerely
Darci Neves Santos