Author's response to reviews

Title: Prevalence, Characteristics, and Outcomes of Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders: A Survey Among Physical Therapists in the State of Kuwait.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
April 26, 2010
Melissa Norton, MD
Editor-in-Chief, BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders
236 Gray's Inn Road, London, WC1X 8HL, United Kingdom.

RE: MS ID: 9570088933385288

Dear Dr. Norton,

Please accept our edited version of the above-mentioned manuscript entitled “Prevalence, Characteristics, and Outcomes of Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders: A Survey Among Physical Therapists in the State of Kuwait”.

We would like to sincerely thank the reviewers for their time and thought to improve our manuscript. We agreed with most of the comments raised by the reviewers and we implement them in the new edited version of the manuscript. We believe that the new version of the manuscript reads better and is ready for publication. Please see our responses in red to reviewer’s comments, point by point. Thank you for accepting this manuscript for publication in BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders.

Best Regards:

Hesham N. Alrowayeh, PhD, PT
Assistant Professor, Kuwait University
Reviewer: Deborah Alperovitch-Najenson

Minor Essential Revisions

1. On table 2 upper back/exercise, there is a mistake in the percent calculated for not exercising. I believe the p value should be different too. Recalculated and change was added in the text. p-value was verified and it is correct.

2. There are language mistakes to correct. Manuscript was revised
Reviewer: Babatunde Adegoke  
Minor essential revisions

Abstract
1. Pg 2 Line 3: Change the word “incidence” to “prevalence”. Changed
2. Pg 2 Line 4: Change “is to determine” to “was to determine”. Changed
3. Pg2 Line 17: Change “not affected” to “not significantly affected”. Not changed, since it was not statistically tested. Sentence was rephrased.

Background
4. Pg 3 Line 17: Delete the word “the” before “neck”. Deleted
5. Pg 3 Line 21 -22: Recast the sentence reading “The findings could----“as “The findings from the study could help identify the overall prevalence of WMSDs-----” Recasted
6. Pg 5 Line 2: Change “Three hundred questionnaires were distributed” to “Three hundred copies of the questionnaire were” since you administered only one questionnaire in the study. Changed
7. Pg 5 Line 5: Change “The completed questionnaires were collected” to “The completed copies of the questionnaire were collected”. Changed
8. Pg 5 Line 18: Recast sentence starting as “Thus,” to read “Thus, only data from 212 participants were used to calculate prevalence rates”. Recasted

Prevalence of WMSDs
9. Pg 6 Line 8: Change “1-year” to “one year”. Changed
10. Pg 6 Line 10, 12, 14 & 17: Introduce the word “significantly” before “associated” to show that you were talking statistically. Introduced
11. Pg 6 Line 19: Change “not correlated” to “not significantly associated”. Changed
12. Pg 7 Line 1: Change “not associated” to “not significantly associated”. Changed

Outcome of WMSDs
13. Recast the title to read “Impact of WMSDs on participants’ work” since outcome was not investigated in the study. Recasted

Prevalence rate and characteristics of WMSDs
14. Pg 8 Line 17: Change “1-year” to “one year”. Changed
15. Pg 8 Line 20,23: Delete “Table 5” from the text. Reference to table should be restricted to the result section. Deleted
Demographics, work settings and exercise habits

16. Pg 9 Line 13-14: Change “increased incident” to “higher prevalence”. Changed

17. Pg 9 Line 16: Change “was associated” to “was significantly associated”. Changed

18. Pg 9 Line 18: Change “This age –to- LBP relationship” to “This association between age and LBP”. Changed

19. Pg 10 Line 1: Change “low” to “lower”. Changed

20. Pg 10 Line 2: Change “in older age group” to “in our study’s older age groups”. Changed

21. Pg 10 Line 3: Change “not associated” to “not significantly associated”. Changed

22. Pg 10 Line 10: Change “not associated” to “not significantly associated” Changed

Conclusion

23. Pg 12 Line 6: Change “The availability and early access” to “The availability of and early access”. Changed

Major compulsory revisions

24. Sampling technique: It is still not clear the sampling technique employed in the study. Pg 4 Line 8: Participants were randomly selected. Pg 5 Line 2: Questionnaire was distributed randomly to participants. Pg 11 Line 12-13: Convenience sampling was cited as one of the study’s. The questionnaire was distributed to non-randomly selected participants. Change was added in the text.

limitations.

The authors need to reconcile the sampling technique used in the study as presented under participants, procedure and limitation. What do the researchers mean by “Three hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed randomly to the participants?” Did they distribute the questionnaire randomly or distribute to randomly selected participants. If the participants employed random sampling, which type did they use? The questionnaire was distributed to non-randomly selected participants. Participants were chosen on the basis of availability.

Results

Pg 5 Line 18-19: What exactly does the statement “No question was missing more than 5% of the responses” mean? Please recast for clarity and better understanding. Recasted

Prevalence rate and characteristics of WMSDs

25. Pg 8 Line 10-11: Please cite some literatures that have linked orthopaedic manual therapy technique to WMSDs among physical therapists to justify the inference concerning physical therapists in Kuwait. References were added in text.
WMSDs’ impact on work

26. There was some degree of disparity between what was presented under results and what was inferred under discussion concerning the impact of WMSDs on work. Although majority of the participants did not make changes in their work habit or take sick leave, this cannot be interpreted to mean that work duties were not affected by WMSDs or that physical therapists in this study reported no changes in their work habits. This is specially so because the data on WMSDs’ impact on work was not subjected to inferential statistical analysis. Sentence was rephrased.

Table 5

27. It is not clear how ns and percentages reported on the table were obtained. For instance while perhaps 75 participants reported zero sick leave due to neck pain, 79 reported sick leave of 0 day. Why the difference? To worsen the situation, the numbers of participants with WMSDs in the different parts of the body (Table 2) are different for the total figures presented on Table 5. For instance, though only 38 participants had WMSDs in the neck (Table 2), the total figure under this heading in Table 5 is 88. Please reconcile the figures on this table and make it clearer how you obtained the figures and percentages that were cited. Number of sick leave taken reflects how often sick leave was granted. Total number of days with sick leave reflects days participants were absent. Therefore, the disparity -if any- between number of sick leave taken and days absent may be explained by the possibility that sick leave was granted, but participant was not necessarily absent. As for the differences between Table 2 and 4 (you cited Table 5), tables should be interrupted as follow: although 38 participants had WMSDs in the neck, only 15 participants were absent for one day or more.