Author's response to reviews

Title: Pre-competition habits and injuries in Taekwondo athletes.

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To: BMC Musculoskeletal Disorders Editors

Re: 6753550115470346, Mohsen Kazemi, Heather Shearer and Young SU Choung
Pre-competition habits and injuries in Taekwondo athletes.

Dear editors,

I would like to thank the reviewers for the detailed reviews and recommendations they have made. Please accept the followings as the revision cover letter for our manuscript.

The followings are the revisions requested by Dr. Andy M lane:

1) To strengthen the case for the study and to explain why we could not focus more on weight-making we added, “To date there is a lack of research in the areas of weight cycling and its perceived benefits among Taekwondo athletes. There is also limited research in the areas of social support and injury profiles in Taekwondo athletes outside of competition. This pilot study is an initial step towards increasing our knowledge in these areas.”

2) We added the following to provide a rationale for the data analysis, “The rationale for only reporting frequencies is due to the small sample size of the study, making the use of other analyses like Pearson’s or Fisher’s Exact Test erroneous.”

3) We have provided the reference for the statement, “Most martial arts athletes practice between two to four times per week [1].” We also added the following to further clarify our opinion, “However, like in any sport, the frequency and hours of martial arts training can vary widely depending on athletic and competitive level of the individual.”

4) We have made further changes to make the link between Taekwondo and boxing by adding the following, “Like many of these sports, Taekwondo consists of repeated-effort, high intensity physical demands. In addition to this, Taekwondo competition is structured in a similar fashion to boxing and rowing in that athletes are required to meet weight requirements in order to compete.”

5) We revised the following statement, “Athletes using this weight control technique are mistaken in thinking that an advantage will be gained over the opponent competing at his/her natural weight.” and added further explanation, “To date there has been no research investigating the perceived benefit of weight cycling among Taekwondo athletes and this is an area in which much work should be undertaken. Due to the similarities between boxing and Taekwondo, with respect to competition weigh-ins, it may be possible to infer that Taekwondo athlete’s perceptions of this technique may be similar. One study examining weight cycling among boxers reported that all the subjects felt it necessary to lose weight prior to competition and that it improved their performance [10]. Athletes using this weight control technique may be mistaken in thinking that an advantage will be gained over the opponent competing at his/her natural weight. To this point the research findings into the effect of food and fluid restriction has been equivocal [10].”
6) We indicated that we had used Statistica Release 6 in the manuscript.
7) We indicated in our manuscript that, unfortunately, there is no research to our knowledge with regards to prevalence of weight making in Taekwondo.
8) We were not able to expand on psychological factors in our study because of lack of evidence and research in this area in Taekwondo. We revised the manuscript to state this fact.

The followings are the revisions made to address Dr. Schmitt’s comments. We have included numbers and percentage for each statistical finding for the benefit of readers.
We added the following to the manuscript with regards to traumatic and overuse injuries, “A distinction can be made between overuse and traumatic forms of injury, although, in reality they could be considered as points along one continuum. Overuse injuries may occur following continued or accumulated microtrauma to a structure or body area [8]. Traumatic injuries are the result of physical trauma or external force to a certain region leading to a diminished functional ability [8]. In the current pilot study no distinction was made between these forms of injury although it would be an interesting feature to examine in future research.”

I hope you find the revisions satisfactory. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further question.

Sincerely,

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