Author's response to reviews

Title: Prediction of width of un-erupted incisors, canines and premolars in a Ugandan population: a cross sectional study

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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Dear Editor
BioMed Central

Re: MS: 2010262245493287 – “Prediction of width of un-erupted incisors, canines and premolars in a Ugandan population: a cross sectional study”

We are grateful for the reviewers’ comments that have greatly improved the readability of the manuscript.
We have generally revised the manuscript in conformity with the journal style (see the title page, the Reference section and the Authors’ contribution).

The following are specific responses to reviewer’s comments:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Reviewer: Page 5--“The coefficients of reliability... were calculated by method of errors...." I have no idea what the "method of errors" is. Indeed, It is unclear what methods were used in the error study. Paired t-tests aren't the way it is usually done, by the way. Pearsonian product-moment correlation isn't either. Intra-class correlation would be better.
Response: We have re-analysed the reproducibility for the measurement of tooth widths based on intraclass correlation coefficients (see Reliability test and Data analysis sections on pages 5 and 6, respectively). The analysis has led into citation of a reference and we have substituted reference no. 28 (see Reference section).

2. Reviewer: Page 6--“probability level was set at 5%” For what? Do they mean that they set their Type I error rate at p<.05?
Response: We have revised the sentence (see Data analysis, page 6, line 12).

3. Reviewer: Page 8--I suggested that their correlations were remarkably high and thus required some comment. I suggested "genetics"; however, I expected more than just "genetic influence" in the discussion. What sort of influence? Greater homogeneity in this African population? What?
Response: Based on the values previously reported from different races, the racial (genetic) differences would be the most likely explanation. The present study being cross sectional has limitation on assessing cause - effect, we would be cautious to over speculate other possible explanations.

4. Reviewer: Table 1 seems to be descriptive statistics. Accordingly, to what hypothesis do the P<.05 asterisks refer? It makes no sense....
Response: We appreciate the reviewer pointing out this error: We have accordingly removed the asterisks from the table.
5. Reviewer: Tables 3 & 4--probability can’t be 0; it can round to 0, but it can’t BE 0.000. Instead, use P< 0.001
Response: We have revised the p-values (see Tables 3 and 4).

Minor Essential Revisions
6. Reviewer: Table 5--"Maxillary canine and premolars" has an asterisk, but the 95% confidence interval includes 0--one of the signs is probably missing.
Response: We think the 95% confidence intervals in Table 5 indicate significant differences at p<0.05. They would be otherwise if they include 1 (unity).

7. Reviewer: Page 3 (twice)--It is Johnston, not Johnson
Response: We regret the mistake, we have accordingly corrected the error (see Abstract and Background sections, page 2 and 3, respectively.

8. Reviewer: Item 23 in Lit cited--Moyers'
Response: We have corrected the mistake. Changed Moyers’ to Moyers (see Background section, last sentence, page 3).

Discretionary Revisions
9. Reviewer: The authors need to decide whether it’s to be "t test" or "t-test"
Response: We have changes t-test to t test (see Results section, page 7).

10. Reviewer: Page 5--It’s a good trick to get dental casts to use a pair of sliding vernier calipers. Perhaps getting rid of "using" would be a good idea.
Response: We have substituted ‘using’ with ‘with’ (see Measurement of tooth mesio-distal width section, page 5).

Thank you once again.

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Corresponding author