Author's response to reviews


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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Dr Peter Robinson,

Thank you for your positive response to our submitted manuscript MS: 1704200390982502. We have carefully read and considered the reviewers’ comments and suggestions to the manuscript “Trends in tooth loss in relation to socio-economic status among Swedish women, aged 38 and 50 years. Repeated cross-sectional surveys 1968-2004.” In this letter we give responses to these suggestions and explain the changes made in the revised manuscript. We hope that you will find these changes in accordance with your and the second reviewer’s intentions.

Referee 1 has accepted the manuscript.

Referee 2

Ad sampling method and non-participation analysis.

A) On page 5, after the last sentence, a new sentence is added (starts with However), which continues on page 6. On page 6 the first paragraph has been altered (starts on line 3) to better describe the situation, as well as an additional sentence in the end of this paragraph.

B) Regardless of participation, for all women in 2004/05 information concerning income, place of living, marital status and migrant status were obtained from the local fiscal authority as shown in the study of Björkelund et al 2008 (ref nr 22). According to the suggestion from the reviewer we have removed the “concerning the medical part of the study” on page 5, last paragraph, due to the small difference in participation rate and since previous analysis (Björkelund et al) did not reveal any important difference between participants and non-participants. Thus, we also removed the first sentence under the heading Non-participation analysis on page 6. These alterations simplify the text and make it easier to interpret the study population since we only analyzed the individuals that participated in the dental examination.
We also changed in the disposition of the content under the same heading (“Non-participation analysis”), page 6-7, as well as added more information about questions asked to the non-participants together with some findings from 1968/69.

Ad survey method.

On page 7, the last sentence in the first paragraph of the sub heading “study methods” explains that the number of teeth was assessed only from the panoramic radiographs.

Ad statistical methods.

We have used the time variable as follows: 1 denotes 1968, 2 denotes 1980, etc. We have analyzed our data that gives an arbitrary figure to the variable each examination year and thus we have analyzed the data comparable to the Thomson WM et al paper in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 2002;26 (6).

Ad results.

A) In table 1 we added in the heading what kind of statistical testing we used and beneath the table where the * is we did some clarifying as well.

On page 8 under the heading Statistical analyses we added “...including a post-hoc test (LSD)...”.

B) Under the sub heading Number of teeth on page 9, we added “(data not shown in Table 1)” on line 3 to clarify that the data on edentulism is not presented in table 1.

C) Because income was only available from the studies 1968 and 2004, we find it sufficient to describe it in the text under results, since the tables already displays a lot of information.

D) Concerning possible interaction analysis, we have reported this analyses on page 9, heading “Statistical analysis”, second paragraph, last sentence but we now added (data not shown).

E) We agree that the sentence that starts with “The impact of social group on the number of teeth decreased in the models from I to IV” needs to be explained. Hence, we added a finishing line together with an additional sentence (page 12, first paragraph).

Ad discussion.

A) The outcome variable i.e. the number of teeth has been measured the same way across all the survey years, i.e. from the panoramic radiographs, please see page 7, under the heading
“Study methods”, last line. On page 12, last paragraph, we also clarified the sentence that starts with “The measurements have been the same...”

B) In table 4 model I we have displayed edentulism, and we believe it is important to elucidate not only the number of remaining teeth but also the proportion of edentulous women as well. Since it is a repeated cross-sectional study over 36 years, we conclude that the edentulism among middle-aged women has decreased remarkably.

Additional information:

A professional language consultant has reviewed the manuscript.

Sincerely

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