Author's response to reviews

Title: Taste hyposensitivity in Japanese schoolchildren.

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Dr Wael Sabbah
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Mari Ohnuki, Masayuki Ueno, Takashi Zaitsu & Yoko Kawaguchi
"Taste hyposensitivity in Japanese schoolchildren"

Dear Dr Wael Sabbah
Editor in Chief,
BMC Oral Health,

Thank you very much for your e-mail dated February 14, 2014, together with the reviewers’ comments. We are very pleased that you and the reviewers expressed an interest in our paper.

Our point-by-point responses to the referees’ comments are below. The text has been revised to accommodate our responses to these comments, which were highlighted with red color.

Response to Reviewer

Reviewer1

Minor Essential Revisions
1. On the line 5 of page 8, “and “needs between “(7th-9th grade)” and “6.3%”.

[Response]
We have added ” and “ on the line 9 of page 8.

2. On the line 2 of page 11, “et al “ should be italic, or others have to be changed.

[Response]
We have changed ” et al “ to italic on the line 8 of page 11.

3. On the first line of page 12,”7“ should not be superscript.

[Response]
We have changed superscript ”7“ to normal font on the line 7 of page 12.

Discretionary Revisions
1. Is the first paragraph of page 9 shown in a table? It may be useful to read if there is a table for this analysis.

[Response]
We have made a new table 3 (page 21). We also have added the explanation on results of Taste
hyposensitivity (page 9 line 4-9).

2. On the line 9 of page 11, 28.8% or 16.2% of participated children are not many, so it may be better to use different words although I understand that it is “many” if you compare with other graders.

[Response]  
We have corrected the sentence as "In this study, relatively large number of students in the 1st-3rd grade presented sour or bitter-taste hyposensitivity” (page 11 line15-16).

3. The sentence in the line 10 of page 11 seems too strong to state. It may be better to use hedging (page11 line15-16).

[Response]  
We have corrected the sentence as “These generations of students might not recognize the sour- and bitter- taste well” (page11 line16-17).

Refree2

1. Introduction:  
I. There is an inconsistent use of the terms taste disorder and taste hyposensitivity.
For example, in the introduction paragraph 1 line 4 reads ‘taste disorder/hyposensitivity while in the discussion paragraph 5 line 3 ‘taste hyposensitivity/disorder’. Re-check consistency in the whole manuscript.

[Response]  
We have used the word ‘taste disorder/hyposensitivity’ consistently in the whole manuscript.

II. The introduction could benefit from a definition of the term taste hyposensitivity/taste disorder or the term(s) you intend to use to describe the researched condition throughout the manuscript. This may be useful to readers who may not regularly engage in this area of research.

[Response]  
We have added the definition of the term taste disorder/hyposensitivity (page9 line14-16).

2. Materials and methods: Although the method used to investigate taste in participants is well described, there is no information on the study design, sampling and recruitment of participants.
I. How was the sample size arrived at?

[Response]  
We have added how the sample size was arrived on the line 9-11 of page 5.

II. Did all invited agree to participate?  Consent?  More details are needed.
3. Discussion:
I. In paragraph 3 line 6 of the discussion, it is mentioned that a nutrition survey was not undertaken, but the reason as to why it was not done is not discussed. Could you perhaps add one line explaining why? This will flow well alongside the well-discussed reasons around not performing invasive zinc blood tests.

[Response]
We have added the reason why the nutrition survey was not undertaken in the discussion section (page 10 line 14-16).

II. The discussion is generally well written, but the last paragraph is misleading. The first two sentences of this last paragraph appear disconnected. Kindly re-read and re-word.

[Response]
We have re-worded the sentence of the last paragraph in the discussion section (page 12 line 17-page 13 line 2).

4. Abstract: The last line of the abstract conclusion could be reworded to create better clarity. It currently reads ‘Taste hyposensitivity has been investigated largely studies on the elderly, however it is suggested necessary to investigate the causes of taste hyposensitivity among the younger generation to pursue a better understanding of the prevalence and nature of these conditions.’

I. The sentence is not grammatically correct and it does not accurately convey what was found in the current study.

[Response]
We have changed the conclusions of abstract (page3 line7-10).

II. A reference to the findings of the current study and the need for more research on younger generations may improve the statement and the conclusion.
Minor issues not for publication.

[Response]
We have changed the conclusions of abstract (page3 line7-10).

Check spellings:
I. last paragraph of the introduction ‘invetigate’ should be investigate
II. line 4 of the paragraph on ‘taste tests’ ‘consentrations’ should be concentrations
III. Acknowledgements ‘scientifc’ should be scientific

[Response]
We have changed these spellings.
We hope that the revised manuscript is now suitable for publication in *BMC Oral Health*.
Sincerely yours,
Mari Ohnuki DDS, PhD