Reviewer's report

Title: Backward walking training improves balance in school-aged children

Version: 1 Date: 30 June 2011

Reviewer number: 2

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This study investigated the effect of backward walking training on balance in children. Although it’s an interesting paper and give us some new information, a number of concerns must be addressed. Much more detail must be provided regarding the subject recruitment, exercise protocol and assessment method. The discussion section should be improved.

1. Major Compulsory Revisions:
   1) Introduction: the purpose of the study is clearly stated. However, literature related to the effect of exercise on balance in children is not fully addressed.
   2) Method#
      A. The method of recruitment of volunteers is not clear. What populations were they derived from? What’s the criterion of selection? How were they contacted?
      B. There does not seem to have been a predetermined sample size calculation, Why 8 subjects each group?
      C. The exercise protocol used in the study should be described in detail. Which physical exercises were taken by the control group#Was the intensity of exercise same between groups?
      D. The protocol of assessments is unclear. What does mean “the difficulties of stability level were increased progressively in the five assessments”? Did each balance assessment use different level of difficulty of stability of testing? Why took the different assessment level#Also, the author should give the detailed procedure of assessment.
   3) The discussion section should be enhanced. The author should analyze and discuss the results according to characteristics of balance in children. For the cited studies, the experimental design should be provided, including subject information, test protocol, and test methods. The insufficient information on the published studies has made the discussion unclear and confusing.

2. Minor comments
   The authors should check the paper thoroughly for grammatical and sentence structure limitations.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being
published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.