Author’s response to reviews

Title: The Prevalence of Obesity in Older Adults in Iran: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

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Author’s response to reviews:

Reviewer reports:

Maria Fernanda Carrillo-Vega (Reviewer 1): General comments

For a local context, this is an important study, as there is no recent meta-analysis of obesity in older adults in Iran. Although, it has to be strengthened to be published

1. Recent reports and consensus have recommended to reject the term elderly and to prefer the terms older person or older adult, to be more respectful to the individuals that experience the ageing process. Then, it is suggested to change the term throughout the manuscript.

Respond: The entire text of the word (older adult) has been replaced (All pages).

Methodology

1. Searching strategy is not clear. It is missing, for example, if there's was a manual search in the reference section of the papers included and if some strategy was taken if the complete text was not found through the initial search. It would be essential to know if authors were contacted for additional information if needed.

Respond: corrected, Page 3, Para 7 and Page 4, para 1, Methods Section
2. No definition of obesity is given. There is not clear if BMI or waist circumference or hip-waist ratio was considered. If BMI were considered, it would be necessary to mention the criteria used for the diagnosis, as many authors have established particular cutoff points for older adults.

Respond: corrected, Page 4, Para 1, Methods Section

3. Eligibility criteria are incomplete. What was the targeted age? Healthy or with comorbidities populations were included?

Respond: corrected, Page 3, Para 7, Methods Section

4. It is not clear what happened when a duplicate publication of another study was found or the strategy that was followed in cases of multiple publications from the same population or cohort.

Respond: corrected, Page 4, para 3, Criteria for selection and evaluation of the literature quality Section

5. There is no clear explanation of the analysis of the studies sample size and variance of each Article. On the other hand, there is no clarity in the analysis section, what tests were used to evaluate the probability of publication bias. It is true that Egger test and Begg and Mazumdar's rank correlation test, as well as significance level, are mentioned on the results section, but is not the best place to report this critical information.

Respond: corrected, Page 5, Para 2, Statistical analysis Section

6. It is not clear if a meta-analysis to estimate pooled prevalence, usually a random-effects model, was conducted. Probably a subgroup analyses to examine the possible effects of the included studies quality or other variables could be relevant. It is not clear in the analysis section if it was done or not.

Respond: corrected, Page 6, Para 5, Results Section

Results

7. It is essential to include a clear explanation of the population characteristics in the results section. For example, the total number of individuals or media of age need to be in this section, not in the discussions, as it is.

Respond: corrected, Page 6, Para 3, Results Section
8. In page 6 it mentions a "checklist of data from selected articles". It seems to be part of the used methodology, not a result. Probably the name of the table needs to be changed to clarify that is an article characteristics table.

Respond: corrected, Page 6, Para 1, Results Section

Discussion

9. No clear comparison with other studies is made. It only describes other studies, but there is no clear relation to the results of the present analysis.

Respond: corrected, Page 7, Para 1, 2 and 3, Discussion Section

10. It is important to note that, for a meta-analysis to be valid, an exhaustive search is needed. In this context, a better search and accessibility strategy needed to be done to have the complete contents of the articles. Additionally, the authors mentioned in the limitations sections that "low-quality studies" were used, but there are not clear quality criteria explained in the methodology section.

Respond: corrected, Page 5, Para 1, Methods Section

Mariana González-Lara (Reviewer 2):

To my consideration, there should be a major revision for the spelling, since there are some lines which are not well understood.

Respond: The article was reviewed and edited.

Other point to consider is that authors emphasize that lack of motivation is an important reason for gain weight and obesity, that is not the main reason, there are others involved, such as obesogenic environments, type of food they consume; additional to this, the changes in body composition in older adults could underestimate the body mass index misclassifying obesity.

In the text authors mention: "the most important difference due to higher obesity prevalence in elder women could be multiple births, hormonal differences, and physiologic, metabolic, as well as nutritional habit differences", how differ nutritional habits between men and women?

Respond: corrected, Page 7, Para 2, Page 8, Para 2, Discussion Section