Author’s response to reviews

Title: Establishing a genetic link between FTO and VDR gene polymorphisms and obesity in the Emirati population

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Dr. Matteo Pasini,

We are grateful for reviewing our original manuscript for the BMC Medical Genetics journal. We would also like to thank the two reviewers, Dr. Yiannis Vasilopoulos and Dr. Francesca Marchegiani for their time, valuable comments and constructive suggestions to help improve the quality of our manuscript. We have revised the manuscript accordingly to address the reviewers’ concerns. Please find below a point-by-point response (in blue) to the reviewers’ comments (in bold). To make the review process easier, we have also added the manuscript page and line numbers in the responses below, which refers to the revised manuscript “Khan et al. 18082017.docx”. The “Manuscript Track Changes.docx” highlights the changes made.

With this revised manuscript, we hope that you find it suitable for publication in your respected journal.
General Changes

1. The number of references has increased from 27 to 50.

2. A “conclusion” section has been added according to the formatting guidelines of the journal.

3. All three figures have been added in separate word files named “Figure 1”, “Figure 2” and “Figure 3” according to the formatting guidelines of the journal.

4. We rechecked our data and had 201 obese, 115 overweight, and 98 normal subjects rather than 201 obese, 114 overweight, and 99 normal subjects what was previously reported. This meant the demographic table had to be updated, however there were no significant changes.

5. We have replaced the boxplot in Figure 1 with another plot as we feel that the differences in BMI values between the three FTO genotypes is now better illustrated for the reader. This has been included in a separate word document.

6. We added a new analysis which analyzed the interaction between the FTO SNP rs9939609 and physical interaction looking at the effect on increase BMI risk. We have updated our “Statistical Analyses” section under "Research Design and Methods" to include this new analysis, which can be found on Page 8 Line 166-168. The result of the analysis is described on Page 10 Line 208-215 and is reported in Table 5 on Page 28.

Should you require more information please do not hesitate to contact me at Habiba.alsafar@kustar.ac.ae