Reviewer's report


Version: 3 Date: 3 September 2014

Reviewer: Christoph Fusch

Reviewer's report:

Most of the comments have been addressed the satisfaction of the reviewer. However some comments have been only addressed as response to the reviewers, but not in the text of the revised manuscript. Most of the address methodological issues and hence we feel that the manuscript would improve from incorporating the responses into the revised version.

# 6), #7), #9) modify also in the new manuscript

#8) Suggest to add the data mentioned in the response (as additional material/supplemental files)

#10) Disagree with this response. Feasibility studies should have sample size calculations/justifications. Obviously, the numbers will depend mainly on the outcome parameter chosen to test the hypothesis whether a study is feasible or not (e.g. recruitment rate etc). Please address accordingly

#11) The second argument/paragraph is weak. Playing the devil’s advocate one could argue that the interaction with staff could have led to the withdrawal of participants. I think this is worth being discussed.

#12) This argument is not completely valid. The BMI z-scores reflect median and distribution of the population investigated. Because the onset of puberty varies largely amongst individuals, a child that starts early with its growth spurt will virtually lose BMI-z-scores whereas a late starter might gain. I do not think that there is a solution to the problem because individual assessment of pubertal stages/growth spurt/% of reached final height would be required which might not be doable in such a setting. Alternatively, this could be overcome by comparing two groups that have a similar composition with respect to pubertal development. I feel that it is worth being mentioned in the discussion.

#16) and 17) We feel that one or two sentences about the basic limitations of using BMI based measures should appear in the discussion.

#19) the limitations of self-reporting should be briefly discussed in the revised version

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests’