Author’s response to reviews

Title: Prevalence and incidence of musculoskeletal extremity complaints in children and adolescents. A systematic review

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a revised version of our manuscript; ID: BMSD-D-17-00271 about the prevalence and incidence of musculoskeletal extremity complaints in children and adolescents. Again, we appreciate the constructive comments, and hope the concerns from the reviewer have now been addressed, and that you will find the changes to be adequate. Please, find below a response to each of the points raised by the peer reviewers.

Yours sincerely,

Signe Fuglkjær

Comments from Helen French (Reviewer 2)

Abstract- state that meta-analysis was not possible due to study heterogeneity. There are no quantitative results which I understand is down to the variation in populations, ages and time points used but could the overall prevalence/incidence estimates be provided in the abstract.

ANSWER: We have added one sentence to the conclusion: ‘A meta-analysis, or even a simple overall description of prevalence and incidence of musculoskeletal complaints in children and adolescents was not feasible, due to a large variety in the studies, primarily related to outcome measurements.’ (Abstract, conclusion)
Background

Page 3, line 55: change 'unspecific' to 'non-specific'
ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 2 line 51).

Methods

Page 3, line 70 change 'like' to 'of' before 'musculoskeletal extremity'
ANSWER: This has now been changed to ‘found the broad term of musculoskeletal extremity complaint (MEC) to be most comprehensive (p. 3 line 67).

Page 3, line 74 change 'In example' to 'For example'
ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 3 line 71).

Page 5, line 22 unclear what you mean by 'our results were unrelated'... unrelated to what?
ANSWER: Thank you for the comment. We have now changed it: ‘since our results did not include analyses of prognosis or associations.’ (p. 5, line 121)

Page 5, line 26, correct spelling of full-filled to fulfilled
ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 5 line 125).

Page 6, line 136 change 'would be' to 'was'
ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 5 line 135).

Analyses

Page 6, line 160 add the word 'a' between 'as' and 'series'
ANSWER: We prefer to leave it as it is, as the sentence refers back to ‘these studies’ in plural (p. 6 line 160).

Results

Page 7, line 184-85. State explicitly here that the final number of included studies was 22.

ANSWER: We have added one sentence to that matter ‘thus 22 studies were included in the final analyses’ (p. 7 line 184)

Page 9, line 199-200. merge the two sentences 'Of the 19.....’ and 'Four with...'

ANSWER: this change has now been performed (p. 9 line 201)

Page 9, line 201 change 'data was' to 'data were'

ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 9 line 202).

Page 9, line 204 reword 'as different as' to 'such as '

ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 9 line 204).

Page 9, line 212 delete 'consequently'

ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 9 line 212).

Page 10, line 223 not sure what you mean by 20% to 280%

ANSWER: We have tried to clarify this: ‘Among the older children, five of the six included studies reported 0.2 to 2.8 times more knee complaints than ankle/foot complaints’ (p. 9 last paragraph)

In the results sections, where you are describing the results for different population, please direct the reader to which table you are referring to.
ANSWER: We have now added this in relevant places. (p. 9 last paragraph and p 10 first paragraph)

Table 5: Are the ratios the correct way around in the final column for traumatic:non-traumatic. They appear to be the opposite to the figures in the traumatic and non-traumatic columns

ANSWER: Thank you for the comment. The ratio reported was Non-traumatic:Traumatic, and the headline in the last column has now been changed. Furthermore, the order of the traumatic and non-traumatic has been changed.

Page 12, lines 2151-256 formatting error with text 'general population studies' - is this a table legend? Again refer to which table in the next section on clinical population studies.

ANSWER: The headline should be in the right format now. Table references have been added (p. 12, first paragraph)

Discussion

Page 13, line 294 add the study reference 'based on one study'

ANSWER: Thank you for the comment. The reference have now been added (p. 13 2nd paragraph)

Page 14, lines 324-326- merge sentences 'The included 22...' and 'And this prevented'

ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 14, 3rd paragraph).

Page 15, line 347 move the word 'also to between 'complaint' and 'needs'

ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 15, 1st paragraph).

Page 15, line 352 change 'in the rest' to 'in the remaining studies'

ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 15, 1st paragraph).
Page 15, line 354-355 Reword 'During the work with this review' to 'It became apparent during this review.....'

ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 15, 1st paragraph).

Page 15, line 356 clarify what you recommend to standardise reporting of

ANSWER: We have changed the paragraph to: ‘Thus, during this review, it became apparent that there is a strong need for better and more homogenous data collection methods. We therefore think it is time to make an effort to standardize future studies in relation to data collection with due consideration to demarcation of the area, the severity and frequency of pain, and the parent/child reporting relationship. Furthermore, common age group definitions should be agreed upon. This could for example be obtained through a Delphi process followed by a cross-cultural adaption of age-standardized questionnaires.’ (p. 15 end of first paragraph)

Conclusion

Page 16, line 373 change 'large variety in the studies' to 'study heterogeneity'

ANSWER: This has now been changed (p. 16, 2nd paragraph).