Author's response to reviews

Title: Secular trends in age at menarche among Chinese women born from 1955 to 1985

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Version: 2
Date: 2 September 2014

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1. combine the background and the aims:

Background: Improvements in socioeconomic conditions and population health have been linked to declining age at menarche. In China, secular trends in age at menarche following extensive economic reform during recent decades have not been thoroughly studied. This study examined the overall trend in age at menarche and assessed differences in the rate of age at menarche change over time, and between urban and rural populations and education levels.

2. revise the contents of ethics and consent in the method:

Study population

This retrospective study examined data from women who registered in the PHCSS between 1993 and 2005. The PHCSS was established by the National Center of Maternal and Infant Health at Peking University Health Science Center in 1993 as an essential component of a population-based China-U.S. Collaborative Project for Neural Tube Defect Prevention, with population coverage of approximately 20 million from 27 cities and counties in China (6 in one northern province and 21 in two southeastern provinces). Details describing the PHCSS have been published previously [20,21]. Data collection and all method used in the surveillance program were approved by the institutional review board (IRB) of Peking University Health Science Center. An informed consent was obtained from every subject. Women residing in areas covered by the PHCSS registered at their marital physical examination, or at their first prenatal visit. At the time of registration in the PHCSS, women self-reported information on demographic, socioeconomic, medical and reproductive history. Data were entered into the PHCSS database electronically by trained staff at the local sites, and sent to the National Center of Maternal and Infant Health for data checking and cleaning.
3. Modified the format of Authors' contributions:

Authors' contributions

YL initiated the concept, designed the study, conducted statistical analysis, interpreted the data, wrote the first draft and edited the final version of the manuscript; LM developed the study design, assisted with statistical analysis, interpreted the data, and critically reviewed and modified the manuscript; JY assisted in statistical analysis and interpreted data; RW assisted in data interpretation and manuscript preparation, and critically modified the manuscript; JZ and SL revised the manuscript critically for important intellectual content; and ZL initiated the concept, designed the study and contributed to the final version of the manuscript. All authors have reviewed and approved the submission of the manuscript and acknowledged their responsibility for the research presented.

4. add line numbering