Author's response to reviews

Title: Scoliosis Research Society Members Attitudes Towards Physical Therapy and Scoliosis Specific Exercises for Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis

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Author's response to reviews: see over
The authors would like to thank the reviewers for providing comments/suggestions to improve our manuscript. A point-by-point reply to their comments follows:

**Reviewer's report**

**Reviewer:** Raphael Adobor

*Manuscript is generally well written. I have few comments that might improve the quality of the paper. The conclusions in the abstract and the manuscript should be compulsorily revised. The rest are minor essential revisions.*

**Abstract, Results:** Authors wrote that “The majority of the 263 respondents were from North America (175), followed by Asia (37) and Europe (36). Comments: Please report in percentages for easier comparison.

Percentages added.

**Conclusion:** Authors wrote that “The results show that although over half of the respondents use SSE for AIS”, Comment: The results of the study do not support this conclusion. The results show that only 25% use PT and 25% use SSE. However more than half (53%) of the respondents noted an increase interest in SSE.

Sentence revised to “The results show that 22% of the respondents use SSE for AIS, skepticism remains regarding the benefit of SSE for AIS.”

For easier reading, please give separate conclusions for PT and SSE and how duration of practice affects practice.

Discussion revised.

**Manuscript**

The manuscript is well written and easy to follow. However, there were repetitions of the findings in both the results and the discussion sections of the manuscript.

Please state only the findings in the results section and discuss the main findings in the discussion section.

Discussion revised.

*It is however difficult to follow if PT or SSE were used for pain preoperatively or postoperatively.*

The survey question did not specify whether the use of either PT or PSSE to treat pain was for pre-operative or post-operative symptoms.

*It is not also clear from the manuscript if respondents use both PT and SSE. Please elaborate.*

Sentence added in both Abstract and Results Section: “The majority of respondents (166, 63%) prescribed neither PT nor PSSE, 28 (11%) prescribed both PT and PSSE, 39 (15%) prescribe PT only and 30 (11%) prescribe PSSE only.”

*The manuscript lacks a conclusion. Please insert a conclusion section where the main findings are stated.*

Conclusion paragraph included in manuscript.
**Reviewer:** Stefano Negrini  
**Reviewer's report:**  
Good paper worth publishing, but some adjustments are needed  

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

1. We don’t know the total number of people involved in the survey, and consequently also the rate of respondents
   
   Sentence in Methods revised to: “After receiving Institutional Board Approval, a web-based survey was sent to all 1,200 Active and Candidate members of the Scoliosis Research Society.”

2. Discussion should discuss the results and not mainly repeat them. You can resume in one sentence the main results, but then you should compare with the other papers published in the literature, and state strengths and limitations of your study.
   
   Discussion revised.

3. In the abstract report the percentages and not the absolute numbers.
   
   Percentages added.

4. In the conclusion of the abstract you state that over half of the respondents use SSE: it did not appear from your data. Can you please explain?
   
   Sentence revised to: “The results show that 22% of the respondents use SSE for AIS, skepticism remains regarding the benefit of SSE for AIS.”

5. It's not clear to this reviewer if there was any overlap between the PT prescribers and the SSE prescribers. If yes, can you please describe it? In any case, knowing the number of respondents that prescribed SSE or PT is highly relevant

   Sentence added in both Abstract and Results Section:  “The majority of respondents (166, 63%) prescribed neither PT nor PSSE, 28 (11%) prescribed both PT and PSSE, 39 (15%) prescribe PT only and 30 (11%) prescribe PSSE only.”

**Minor Essential Revisions**

6. The SOSORT Guidelines suggest to use the term PSSE (Physiotherapic Scoliosis Specific Exercises) and not SSE: can you please justify your choice, or change throughout the paper?

   “Scoliosis Specific Exercises” have been revised to “Physiotherapic Scoliosis Specific Exercises” and “SSE” has been revised to “PSSE” throughout the manuscript.

**Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore). Also Bettany Saltikov (Eur J Phys Rehabil Med 2014) reported this point**

7. There are at least two very important papers highly relevant to this topic that have not been cited: the 2005 SOSORT Consensus on exercises (Weiss et al, Scoliosis 2006), and the Cochrane review (co-published also in Spine) (Romano et al, Cochrane Database Syst Rev, 2012; Spine 2013).

8. Surprisingly, the most important characteristics of PSSE (self-correction and spinal stabilisation) as defined by the SOSORT Consensus, that differentiate PSSEs from normal PT, are not cited

9. There are two more RCTs published in the literature about exercises that are worth publishing: Li 2005 and Kuru 2015. In fact, while Monticone used SEAS (Negrini et al, Eur Spine J 2014 - Letter to the editor), Kuru used Schroth and Li asymmetrical exercises
   
   Citations and references added