Author’s response to reviews

Title: Professional appraisal of online information about children’s footwear measurement and fit: readability, usability and quality

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Author’s response to reviews:

We would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive feedback. We appreciate their efforts in helping us improve the information presented in the manuscript and enhance the rigour of the work presented. Please see below for a point-by-point response to the comments raised. We appreciate the time taken to review our manuscript and thank the reviewers for their insightful and constructive comments. Please see below for a response to these.

Reviewer #1: Thank you for your submission. I found this a very interesting read and would be a great addition to the current literature. I have made some suggestions below:

Page 1, Line 1: A professional panel review of online information about children's footwear- consider revising title, unsure of definition of what is a professional panel review.

• We have removed the term “panel” and the new title reads: A professional review of online information about children’s footwear measurement and fit: readability, usability and quality.

Page 3, Line 37: Is there any data to support statement around online purchasing and do we actually know this is the case? If no supporting data for statement, may consider rephrasing

• We don’t have a reference to support this but have added some further detail to help clarify our position on this.

Line 51: Hodgson et al (in review). Consider citing other sources that are not under review.

• We have revised the references for this statement and removed the work in review. We have revised the text and brought our published study (cited later in the manuscript) to support this discussion.

Page 4, line 27-46. Discusses changes in spatiotemporal measures and joint kinematics. Can you comment further on these changes and consider if these changes can relate back to negative impacts from footwear that is ill fitting. Eg. Reduced velocity etc.
• We have adjusted the text to offer a better overview of the existing literature.

Table 1 - search terms, consider using truncated symbols i.e. Child*
• This has been corrected.

Page 6, line 44- consider re-phrasing sentence to not repeat the word "not" i.e. Web pages were not related to footwear or function"
• This has been corrected.

Page 6- line 44- consider moving search results into "results" rather than methods
• The search was undertaken as part of our methods. It was necessary to identify and sort the sources before the professional panel could appraise the resources. We have kept the search-related data in the methods.

Page 6, line 54- further clarification around appearance score (1-10) and how this rating is completed.
• An example has been added to this section to clarify the calculation of this variable. Additionally, 1-10 has been corrected to read 10-1 as the first rank in google scores 10, the 10th scores 1.

Page 8, line 14- can you comment on how the professional panel were selected, when you say working in footwear roles in terms of defining a professional panel. (expert based on completion of further research within the field, i.e. Completion of further study, PhD etc.)
• We have added some text to this section to help define this further.

Page 8, line 33- Author states use of a standardised criteria for assessment (Appendix 1). Was this developed by the researchers or based on another standardised criteria that has been used within the literature previously? How do scores differ within these categories? May need more explanation and clarification here for the reader.

The terminology “standardised” was intended to mean across the panel as opposed to standardised from another paper and this wording has been removed to avoid this confusion. Standardised tools or instruments already published to rate health information could not be used in this case as the requirements were more specific with a scope relating to footwear specifically.

A range of literature sources were read and synthesised to adopt the terminology and content of the criteria table relating to the more general aspects of the online resources e.g. the use of tables, images, the number of mouse clicks and the navigation etc. In particular, reference 21 Williams et al, was a good example of criteria which were relevant and that our criteria are modelled on, however other papers were used to shape our approach to review the online resources (for example G. Eysenbach, J. Powell, O. Kuss, and E.-R. Sa, “Empirical Studies Assessing the Quality of Health Information for Consumers on the World Wide Web,” JAMA, vol. 287, no. 20, p. 2691, May 2002.Empirical Studies Assessing the Quality of Health Information for Consumers on the World Wide Web) . The more specific aspects such as the objective and subjective content and the measures relate specifically to the aims of the manuscript and are from the authors experience and wider knowledge of footwear fit e.g. that the guides need printing.

Page 9, line 30- include reference within table for SMOG index
• This has been added.

Page 10, line 30-39- consider re-phrasing as sentence is very long.
• This has been corrected.
Page 12, line 21- sentence re-structure, consider addition of comma or full stop within sentence.
• This has been corrected.

Page 13, line 20- Missing word within sentence, consider changing to "implement the information "they" require.
• This has been corrected.

Page 13, line 48- Consider change of sentence structure.
"This could result in confusing messages and inconsistencies for parents, which may result in a distrust of the resources or difficulty in its interpretation. This could potentially lead to problems with inaccurate foot measurements or poor footwear fitting, which could have longer term implications.
• This has been corrected.

Page 14, line 28- end of sentence missing a word, consider re-phrasing or adding in "whether it was appropriate to measure children's …".
• This has been corrected.

Page 14, line 44, consider joining two sentences together with a comma, "Resources which quantified only unidimensional features of the foot such as length were scored lower, as well as those which measured the foot in a non-weightbearing position."
• This has been corrected.

Page 15- Line 17, add in reference for primary search engine being used as google.
• A reference has been included:

Page 15, line 52- change "is assisting footwear fit" to "in assisting footwear fit"
• This has been corrected.

Reviewer #2: Overall this paper is useful in helping clinicians working with children and families to sort through the overwhelming minefield of "advice" that parents are seeking and finding on the internet. It is disconcerting that the majority of advice is coming from commercial websites that clearly have a financial interest in attracting parents to their website and trade. This paper was for the most part well-written however I do have a number of points for the authors that I trust will assist them in their revision of the paper.

In particular, the sections describing the SMOG Index throughout are not clear. The website mentioned in the methods does not clearly indicate what the SMOG Index is. Does it relate to the grade level, and if so what is a grade level of 18? Standard education only goes to grade 12 and in some countries/regions grade 13, so I am not clear what this is.

As stated in the methodology the SMOG index relates to the US grade system, which as the reviewer states is not consistent with global grading or schooling systems. Therefore, throughout the discussion the paper now only refers to the relative age to better suit the international readers of the journal. A sentence has been added to clarify this alongside some further statements and references relating to the SMOG index in the methods. The description for table 4 has been amended and results are kept in here as US grades due to the precision not being able to be transferred to ages e.g. 6.4 versus 6.5 is not the
same but in terms of age ranges would be consistent. However, a few sections of the discussion have been altered to describe age ranges where the grade was referred to in the original draft.

Finally, it may have been useful to also rank the top three health based websites to compare with the commercial sites in terms of the assessment criteria. However, I acknowledge that this was not within the scope of the paper.

• We agree with this but this was not something we had considered at the time and is not currently within the scope of this paper.

Below are points relating to the content.

1. Page 5 first paragraph
   Line 9-11
   Should the aim be more specific to footwear fit?

   • This has been corrected.

2. Page 9 Table 3
   Replace the word "table" in the description for Usability with the word "tablet"

   • This has been corrected.

3. Page 10 first paragraph
   Line 14-16 beginning "....however when these resources..." this doesn't make sense, I can't work out how you determined that they were most commonly in the top three search results from Figure 2

   • This was an error. This was relative to other resources with lower appearance scores. We have added additional clarification to the text.

4. Page 10 last paragraph
   Line 50-57 beginning "The reading ease scores..."
   What is the 3 for - end of line 53?

   • This was a typographical error. This has been corrected.

   Is the SMOG index, the same as the grade level (from the online SMOG reference in the methods)?
   It appears that 12 of the 15 websites had a reading ease score (SMOG Index) less than 6.9, which indicates that the content is pitched at the appropriate age level. I think the way you have described this finding "Only three resources of the 15 scored over 7 for this Index, demonstrating suitability for readers aged 12 years and above" is counter intuitive. Consider re-wording this section.

   • This section has been reworded.

5. Page 11 first paragraph
   Line 2-6 beginning "...those scoring higher in one...." The latter part of this sentence doesn't read clearly. I would add the word "validity". That is, "...and those which scored lower in task validity....reflected this in measure validity, too."
6. Page 11 first paragraph
Line 16-19 beginning "Contrastingly resources..."
However, the SMOG index for resource 3 is 8.2 which pitches the content above the average reading age of 12 years. Therefore, whilst resource 3 might have scored highly on the validity criteria, the content is pitched at an older age group that is not appropriate for lay people.
• This has been revised.

7. Page 12, first paragraph
Line 35-37 beginning "Despite the resources..." This sentence appears to contradict itself. Resources are not common...which resources? Healthcare results are top 3, accounting for 55% of accessed search results, but they are not common? According to Fig 2 Healthcare resources only accounted for 4.2% of the Google search returns. This is confusing.
• This have been revised.

8. Page 13, second paragraph
Line 19-22 beginning "Being able to access..." This sentence does not make sense.
• This sentence has been re-phrased.

9. Page 13 paragraph 2 line 22-25 beginning "The reading ease scores...." this statement is true for most but not all of the resources. I think this needs to be clearer.
• This has been revised.

10. Page 13, second paragraph
Lines 26-31 beginning "The highest score..." This doesn't make sense. For reading ease, the content should be pitched at less than or equal to 12 years of age; yet the authors appear to be saying that a reading age of 13-14 years is ok...."a reading age of 13-14 years of age, which implies that the content of the article should be understood". In the results section on page 10, a reading age of 13-14 years of age was described as "fairly difficult to read". The statement here is contradictory to what was previously stated.
• We have revised the text.

11. Page 15 concluding paragraph
Line 52 beginning "...content was inconsistent in terms of value is assisting footwear fit." This does not make sense. Perhaps the word "is" should be "in"?
• This has been corrected.

12. Reference 6 - needs to be clearer here that this is unpublished and under review.
• This reference has been removed.
13. Reference 22 What type of reference is this? It is not clear where to source this.
• We have included this reference earlier in the text and corrected this.

14. Reference 28 What type of reference is this? It is not clear where to source this.
• This is a textbook. We have corrected the reference (this is now reference 16),

A/Editor comments:
There are a number of references that do not confirm to the style of the journal. Please check all and the style for future submission.
• Thank-you. We have reviewed the references.