

Author's response to reviews

Title: Efficacy of iron fortification compared to iron supplementation among Vietnamese schoolchildren

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Author's response to reviews: see over

Hanoi, 1 November, 2006

Dear Dr. Hiromichi Kumagai,

Thank you very much for your reconsideration of our paper. Hereby, we would like to respond to the editor's comments (in *Italics*).

Editor's comment

However, the Editor agrees with the reviewer's opinion that the logistic analysis is not suitable for comparing the prevalence of anemia at the end of intervention between 3 groups because other groups can not become predictive variables for anemia status of one group. If you would like to show that the effect of iron fortification was not different from that of the iron supplementation, it might be indicated by the chi-square test. If you disagree with this opinion, please explain your position with references.

Our reply

We had some difficulty in understanding what was meant by: "the reviewer's opinion that the logistic analysis is not suitable for comparing the prevalence of anemia at the end of intervention between 3 groups because other groups can not become predictive variables for anemia status of one group."

As could be understood from the introduction and objective of the study, we do not aim to demonstrate that the effect of iron fortification was not different from that of the iron supplementation in the first place.

We disagree that the chi-square test could be used to demonstrate what we want to show with the result in Table 4. In the Logistic model we adjusted (a.o.) for Hb at baseline, and this could not be done with a chi-square test. In addition, neither does it give a quantification of the relative merits of iron fortification as compared to iron supplementation.

However, we must admit that the $OR=1.26$ is very imprecise as reflected by a wide confidence interval, and may therefore not serve the purpose of supporting useful evidence for the aim of the study.

We therefore decided to remove Table 4 completely, and address the issue of effect on anemia prevalence in a more simple and direct way (line 10-14 page 9). Likewise, we also changed the abstract (page 2, line 14-17) and the discussion (page 9, line 19-21)

Editor's comment

Only articles that have been published or are in press can be cited in Nutrition J. Unpublished articles should not be included in the reference list. Since reference 20 seems to be unpublished, we ask you to remove it and revise the related descriptions in the text.

Our reply

Concerning to the reference 20, we referred now to the PhD thesis of Huong Thi Le that is published and contains the paper referred to.

We hope that our revised paper will meet your requirements and will be accepted by your journal.

Thank you very much for you support and we hope to hear from you soon.

With my best regards,

Huong Thi Le