

Reviewer's report

Title: Fruits and vegetables consumption among elderly people: a cross sectional study from Iran

Version: 1 **Date:** 21 October 2009

Reviewer: Jennifer Di Noia

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. The manuscript requires careful editing throughout to correct grammatical errors.
2. Background, second paragraph. The correct title is "Transtheoretical Model." You introduce the model here but do not tie this to the focus of your study. Suggest you add a few sentences that describe the application of this model to fruit and vegetable consumption. As well, elaborate on the other correlates studied and tie this to the relevant literature. This section of the manuscript should conclude with a clear statement of study aims and corresponding research questions/hypotheses.
3. Data analysis. You note that ANOVA, t-tests, and logistic regression analysis were used to analyze you data. The discussion that follows is focused (briefly) on the logistic regression analysis and mention is made of Pearson correlations. Please clarify and elaborate on the analyses performed.

- Minor Essential Revisions

1. You switch terms used to describe your targeted population (e.g., elderly individuals, old people. Old individuals). Suggest you choose one term (e.g., elderly individuals) and use this consistently throughout. In the abstract (background) when you first mention the study population, include the targeted age range so that readers understand how you are defining "elderly."
2. Abstract, Background. Since you are looking at fruit and vegetable consumption and variables hypothesized to influence consumption, you should state this up front.
3. Abstract, Methods. Add information on the statistical analyses performed.
4. Abstract, Results. Add information on the observed intake differences by age, educational attainment, and income level mentioned under "Conclusions."
5. Background. I think you mean CHD, cancer, and stroke are leading (versus important) causes of death among the elderly. Instead of "enough consumption," I think you mean "adequate consumption."
6. Staging measure. You do not include a timeframe for Question 2. Which stage is referred to here? Preparation?
7. Perceived benefits and barriers measure. Were participants asked about their

perceptions relative to eating five daily servings of fruits and vegetables – or any amounts of these foods? Please clarify.

8. Intake measure. More information is needed regarding how this measure was scored. What two questions were assessed using 24-hour dietary recall data? Did participants complete 24-hour recalls?

9. Data analysis. I think you mean logistic regression analysis and not logistic analysis. You note that the variable “chronic disease” was included in your analysis. This is the first mention of this variable. This variable should be introduced under “Measures.” Procedures for operationalizing this variable should also be spelled out. Participants were divided into two groups based on their consumption. It is unclear how intake was dichotomized. Please elaborate on this.

10. Ethics statement. You report this information under Methods. It is not necessary to repeat it here.

11. Discussion of benefit, barrier, and self-efficacy scores. Are there any comparative data that can be used to illustrate how the scores observed in your sample compare with those observed in other samples? You note the means scores and score ranges. It is difficult to interpret the scores based on this information.

12. Regression and correlation analysis. It would be helpful if you reported the correlations between each of the variables studied and F&V consumption (instead of the correlation between social support and intake only). Did you check for multicollinearity prior to conducting the logistic regression analysis? Why was social support excluded from the regression analysis?

13. Discussion. Although this section of the manuscript is tied directly to study results, it is written in several brief paragraphs, some of which include only two sentences. It is suggested that you integrate this material and elaborate on the ideas presented more fully. the

14. Table 1. Add a footer that describes the analyses used to examine subgroup differences.

15. Table 2. “I can’t find any kind of F&V in my local stores” is listed as a benefit. This is confusing. The same is true for “Consuming F&V was recommended in our religion.” Although this may motivate one to consume F&Vs, it is unclear how this represents a benefit of consumption.

- Discretionary Revisions

N/A.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'