

Abstract-

- So, are you saying that short telomere length is not related to aging in cavefish? Is it possible that the short telomere length is incorrectly implicated in aging altogether? Please make this point clear.

Introduction

- please use paragraphs to chunk up the different topics within the introduction
- line 78 – completely agree but change ‘life history differences’ to something else. This seems contradictory as it implies that surface and subterranean conspecifics are living in the same environment – which they are not.
- (MAJOR ISSUE) Subterranean animals may live longer than surface conspecifics, that could be true, but I am not convinced based on Simon et al. that cavefish live longer. Based on their table 1 only one cavefish site had longer living fish – all others matched surface fish ages. I think you need to go into more detail in your introduction on this uncertainty in the results. The particular cave that had the higher ages was not used in your study. Also, the lab reared cave and surface fish had the same ages. If you can find support for longer lived cave animals in general (not limited to just cavefish), you should add it in, otherwise your entire theory moving forward does not make sense.

Methods

- (MAJOR ISSUE) Were reared cavefish kept in a dark environment? How were fish handled? This is important to add to the methods. Oxidative stress is possibly important in telomere length so if cavefish were not in a familiar environment (i.e. darkness, differences in pH etc) or were overhandled (ex. Its possible surface fish have more stressors and are able to adapt better to handling etc), it could impact your results.
- What program or package was used to do the anova?
- Need more information on programs throughout methods

Results

- How many false results or contaminated results did you get? You made a point to mention how stringent your protocol was so I think you should bring up how many had to be re-done or omitted entirely.

Discussion

- The first paragraph holds too many ideas. Separate into 2.