Reviewer's report

Title: Effect of paper quality on the response rate to a postal survey: A randomised controlled trial

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Reviewer: Dr Jean-Francois Etter

Level of interest: A paper of limited interest

Advice on publication: Accept after revision, which I do not need to see

a- Increasing response rates to mail surveys is important. But the intervention (100g vs. 80g paper) was probably not detectable by study participants. Improving the aspect of the questionnaire or accompanying letter may nevertheless have effects if these interventions are more substantial (see reference list).

b- page 3, it would be more correct to say "With the expected sample size, the study had a power of 80% to detect a statistically significant difference at the level of alpha=0.05".

c- To avoid bias in meta-analyses, even negative trials should be published, i.e. including this one.

d- The literature review could be more comprehensive. This would allow for a more in-depth discussion of this topic. See:
White MB, Chambers KM. Type of cover letter and questionnaire color: Do they
Yu J, Cooper H. A quantitative review of research design effects on response rates to questionnaires. Journal of Marketing Research 1983; 20: 36-44.

**Competing interests:**

None declared.