TV viewing and food preferences and food habits among children: a prospective epidemiological study.

General/Compulsory/Essential comments
The authors addressed an interesting issue and make use of a longitudinal data set

1. the participants were recruited from a large city in Denmark. Can the authors comment on the generalizability of their findings. Are these children representative for the whole Danish population? Do they expect that the association between TV viewing and food intake is different between children living in a big city compared to children living in rural areas? If not, than it does not really matter that the sample is not representative, but the authors should state something on this.

2. Related to this, during the follow up measurements 902 of the 1480 invited children agreed to participate again. Was this a selective sample? The authors present some results, but do not state whether the ones who agreed to participate again also differed from the ones who did not agree to participate again with regard to TV viewing and/or food intake. Please comment on this in the discussion. How would this have influenced the findings?

Measurements and analyses

3. reliability of the questionnaires. Was the questionnaire tested for its reliability and/or validity? Please provide this information (preferably for each variable). Also include this in the discussion. The authors discuss the potential interpretation problems with the variable ‘TV viewing while eating’. It would give more insight in the potential problems if reliability measures were available.

4. Were body weight and height measured according standardized protocols? By trained project workers? What was the inter- and intra-rater reliability?

5. the variable TV viewing during meals had an answers option ‘once or twice a week’. Does this include the weekend as well? If so, than the answer alternatives are not mutually exclusive, since the next answer alternative can cover the same days. Please make clear.

6. How was the TV viewing variable used in the analyses? Was it used as a
categorical variable (as explained on page 7) or was it used as a continuous variable?

7. coding of the answer alternatives for ‘healthy food items’. Why was it coded with 0, 1, 2, 3? This suggests equal steps, but looking at the answer alternatives the steps are not equal. Please make clear

8. when calculating the sum scores, did the authors only include the participants without any missing data on these variables? Why not take the mean?

9. interviews. The authors explain that all interviews were carried out by the same person. So did the same person interview more than 1000 children???

10. Why was an interaction with sex tested? Did the authors hypothesize that the association between TV viewing and food preferences/intake would be different between boys and girls? Were other potential moderators tested as well? If so, please state that.

11. How were differences between boys and girls tested? Results are presented, but it was not mentioned in the methods section.

Results

12. I guess the TV viewing variable was not normally distributed, but highly skewed to the right. Therefore, it would be better to present the median and the interquartile ranges.

13. The authors do not find any associations between the ‘change’ variables. Was this because there was actually no change? Of were changes too small?

14. the authors stratified their results by sex because of the significant interaction term. Please also describe the differences in the associations of TV viewing with food preferences between boys and girls. From table 3 it appears that differences are not so big. At least, the direction of the association is in the same direction.

Discussion

15. Since this manuscript was submitted to a public health journal, I really miss the implications for public health. How can, for instance, intervention use the results from the present study?

Minor comments

16. Introduction, statement that ‘different aspects of TV viewing have been related to dietary habits and food preferences in children’ needs a reference

17. typo: The more time spent on TV viewing…. (instead of ‘mere’)

18. typo: page 10, last paragraph on data analyses: ‘……on the group level, but NOT on the individual level’ (‘not’ is missing)

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

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