Reviewer's report

Title: Emotional and instrumental feeding practices of Dutch mothers towards foods eaten between main meals

Version: 1 Date: 13 November 2013

Reviewer: Katja Kröller

Reviewer's report:

The authors report a study assessing the use of emotional and instrumental feeding as well as the used food. In my opinion this is a well designed study, and a mostly clearly written manuscript with properly statistics with only few revisions to made.

Discretionary revisions:

- Within the introduction the authors explain problematic consequences of eating between meals as well as those of parental instrumental and emotional feeding. But here a problematic eating behaviour (e.g. emotional eating) with a higher risk for obesity and other eating disorders is missing.
- The last section of the introduction (leading to the study questions) would be improved by more structure.
- There are two criteria for the use of instrumental feeding. Have both of them to be answered with yes for the existence of instrumental feeding?

Minor essential revisions:

- There are some literal errors during the text.
- The references should be checked for missing years or doublings (e.g. 22 and 28).
- During the method section the description of the group classifications for e.g. age is missing. A reference on table 2 would be helpful.
- Mean values for e.g. age and weight in the sample characteristics might be interesting.

Major compulsory revisions:

- During the abstract as well as the introduction the reader could get the impression of a study analyzing the association between the maternal use of instrumental and emotional feeding and the child’s food intake. The authors should indicate that the study assess the food most often used for emotional and instrumental feeding, which might not necessarily lead to a greater consumption of this food.
- The authors analysed logistic regressions, but there are no significance or odds ratio values during the text. I think these might be helpful for the readers
understanding.
- The authors underscore the relevance of using dichotomous measures for the emotional and instrumental feeding, but this proceeding also ignore the variance in using this feeding strategies, which could be a relevant aspect of especially negative consequences. I think the authors should at least discuss this point.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests