Reviewer's report

Title: Determinants of eating behaviour in university students: a qualitative study using focus group discussions

Version: 1 Date: 24 October 2013

Reviewer: Karen Chapman-Novakofski

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Major Compulsory Revisions

Methods
1. Please describe how many additional focus group sessions were held beyond the point of researcher estimation of saturation, so that true saturation was established.
2. Since genders have different eating habits, how did you evaluate this? Why not have gender specific focus groups?
3. How many cooked for themselves?
4. This is not grounded theory as described. Please provide more insight as to how the authors used grounded theory.
5. Please describe how content analyses were conducted.
6. The lifestyle of those in student residences is very different than those in independent housing. This is a large limitation of the study and results.
7. I am uncomfortable with imposing the SCT on responses unless this was developed into the focus group script. Was the script pilot-tested? How were these questions developed?
8. Many “themes” seem to be sub-themes or saturation was not achieved. There is a wide range of responses. To explain this, better development of your Methods is needed.
9. Drinking seems to be a theme. I don’t see this as different from other colleges; nor the lack of time and unorganized living.
10. An analysis of negative cases is warranted—the one or two comments instead of grouping in with overall themes.
11. Although the authors have used the words “content analysis” and “grounded theory” the results do not support that these techniques were used. Therefore, the overall results and discussion are of concern. Even so, there is not much new information here to contribute to the literature. I appreciate that a European perspective is important, but from the results presented, the sample size was too small and the negative cases too many to really be able to generalize to any except these few students. Furthermore, the interview script should have been developed with SCT informing the questions, or the analyses should have been iterative so that themes were identified. The discussion could then reflect on how
these themes had e to SCT.
Minor: throughout are distracting statements that are neither results nor discussion, such as “we were able to create continuous interactive and lively group discussions.” Major editing needed to focus this paper.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**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.