Reviewer’s report

Title: Taste hyposensitivity in Japanese schoolchildren.

Version: Date: 12 February 2014

Reviewer: Kristina L Wanyonyi

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting paper. It reports on an under-researched area. The potential for more research in the area is made apparent by the useful findings from this study.

The paper could benefit from some minor essential revisions as follows.

1. Introduction:
   I. There is an inconsistent use of the terms taste disorder and taste hyposensitivity.
      For example, in the introduction paragraph 1 line 4 reads ‘taste disorder/hyposensitivity’ while in the discussion paragraph 5 line 3 ‘taste hyposensitivity/disorder’. Re-check consistency in the whole manuscript.
   II. The introduction could benefit from a definition of the term taste hyposensitivity/taste disorder or the term(s) you intend to use to describe the researched condition throughout the manuscript. This may be useful to readers who may not regularly engage in this area of research.

2. Materials and methods: Although the method used to investigate taste in participants is well described, there is no information on the study design, sampling and recruitment of participants.
   I. How was the sample size arrived at?
   II. Did all invited agree to participate? Consent? More details are needed.

3. Discussion:
   I. In paragraph 3 line 6 of the discussion, it is mentioned that a nutrition survey was not undertaken, but the reason as to why it was not done is not discussed. Could you perhaps add one line explaining why? This will flow well alongside the well-discussed reasons around not performing invasive zinc blood tests.
   II. The discussion is generally well written, but the last paragraph is misleading. The first two sentences of this last paragraph appear disconnected. Kindly re-read and re-word.

4. Abstract: The last line of the abstract conclusion could be reworded to create better clarity. It currently reads ‘Taste hyposensitivity has been investigated largely studies on the elderly, however it is suggested necessary to investigate the causes of taste hyposensitivity among the younger generation to pursue a better understanding of the prevalence and nature of these conditions.’
   I. The sentence is not grammatically correct and it does not accurately convey
what was found in the current study.
II. A reference to the findings of the current study and the need for more research on younger generations may improve the statement and the conclusion.
Minor issues not for publication
Check spellings:
I. last paragraph of the introduction ‘invetigate’ should be investigate
II. line 4 of the paragraph on ‘taste tests’ ‘consentrations’ should be concentrations
III. Acknowledgements ‘sciontific’ should be scientific

**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 interest