Reviewer's report

Title: Assessing the Validity of a Self-administered Food-Frequency Questionnaire (FFQ) in the Adult Population of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada

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Reviewer: Vanessa Garcia-Larsen

Reviewer's report:

This is a well written manuscript assessing the validity of a Food Frequency Questionnaire (FFQ) against a chosen gold standard (repeated 24 hrs recall questionnaires). The authors describe in good detail the methods for conversion of food portions into nutrients.

Major comments – none

Minor essential comments

Background – Some of the main issues about disseminating the use of FFQs in epidemiological studies are addressed. A major limitation in interpreting data from FFQs is the lack of homogeneity in Food Composition Tables (FCTs). I would suggest this to be mentioned in the Introduction/background section.

Methods-

My main observation refers to one aspect of their methodology. The authors give very good details of how the FFQ and the chosen gold standard were administered and compared. A major methodological issue is that they use Pearson correlation to compare the correlation between the two instruments (as shown in Table 2). Pearson correlation gives an overall estimate of the association between two instruments, and it is commonly used in studies of validation of dietary questionnaires. However, its use might lead to the wrong interpretation as the correlation is based on the whole sample rather than in the correlation of the intake of one subject against the intake reported by the same subject in the other dietary questionnaire. Using intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC) allows a more accurate assessment and interpretation of the validity of the self reported intake.

Given that one of the objectives mentioned by the authors is to have their paper as a methodological referent for further validation studies, I think it is important that this is addressed, and the use of Pearson vs. ICC included in the Discussion section.

Minor discretionary comment

In the abstract – indicate that it is an FFQ for adults

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