Reviewer’s report

Title: Reductions in sugar sales from soft drinks in the UK from 2015-2018

Version: 0 Date: 13 Aug 2019

Reviewer: Feng He

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In this paper, Bandy et al carried out a cross-sectional study to assess how individual soft drink companies have responded to calls to reduce sugar consumption and to the soft drink industry levy between 2015-2018.

The importance of having a clear reduction in sales of sugar in soft drinks are well described in the paper. The authors are well aware of the previous research works and surveys conducted in the field and the limitations of the data collection methods.

There are several points to be considered before publishing:

* In the manuscript, it is stated that there might be overestimates of sales in Euromonitor due to their indirect approach of estimation. The reliability of the database 'Euromonitor' and 'Brand View' and whether the databases cover all the eligible products needs to be justified.

* In the manuscript, it is not clear when to include/exclude the 100% fruit juice and bottled water in the analysis/tables. Please also clarify if the 'soft drinks' (e.g., in line 188) means all drinks including bottled water and fruit juice or not.

* One of the main reasons for the rise in the volume sales and sugar content in low and zero sugar categories could be the products in high and mid sugar categories being reformulated to low and zero sugar categories.

* In table 2 and table 3, is the IQR more useful than just using the variance?

* There is inconsistency between figures in the text and in the tables. For example, in line 202, the absolute mean sugar content of soft drinks fell from 5.4g/100ml in 2015 according to table 2 rather than from 5.5g/100ml in 2015. In line 205, for the low sugar category the mean sugar content rose from 0.9 g/100ml (0.5-3.2g/100ml) to 4.2g/100ml (0.9-4.7g/100ml) rather than from 1.7 g/100ml to 3.2 g/100ml.

* Please provide further details on the volume sales or difference to the main results for including/excluding the 12 brands that are not sold in supermarkets.
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