Reviewer's report

Title: The influence of academic examinations on energy and nutrient intake in male university students

Version: 2 Date: 21 July 2015

Reviewer: David Garcia

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

Abstract:
Background: Please include why it is important to examine this relationship and the purpose of the study. We "carried out" is informal- versus "the purpose of our study was to examine..."

Methods:
Please revise "with that"- it is unclear.

Please include a period after energy intake for cluster analysis categorised sentence. In addition, please specify what the clusters represent.

Results:
The results would be strengthened with greater detail (energy intake and nutrient values of the Clusters).

Conclusions:
While the conclusion does speak to the findings, it does not provide direction for next steps or why the findings are meaningful.

Key words:
Please consider new key words, they should not repeat the title (all do with the exception of stress).

Introduction:
The body weight gain related to the first year University student appears tangential given you did not measure weight. Please remove.

The last paragraph leads the reader to believe that the purpose of the study is to use the photographic method as a way to reduce measurement error and participant burden. However, wearing a camera on your neck for 8 days may be burdensome as well. Please consider removing this paragraph- the purpose of the study is to examine the influence of academic exams on energy and nutrient intake in university males correct?
Methods:

Very well written. However, please include address the validity of the photographic 24-hour recall method and include a reference. Also, please clarify if your values were derived from the 4-day average for examination versus non-examination values.

Results:

Please provide a table of participant characteristics (total and by clusters). This would provide some context to the reader.

Discussion:

Please clarify what number “S” represents in the first sentence- Cluster S?

In the paragraph related to study strengths/weaknesses, it is not accurate to say that the photographic method provided superior insight give you did not have a comparison group not using this method. In addition, the introduction relies heavily on stress as a driver of eating behaviors. Do you have the number of exams the men took as a proxy measure? This information is highly relevant and not addressed in the manuscript.

Conclusion:

Again, it is not accurate to state that the photographic method measures diet at a “total” level. Focus the conclusions on your findings, not the method. What are the next steps and the public health impact.

Tables- data should be represented in same units (Table 1 has MJ/d, while Table 2 has kj/day- the manuscript includes kcals/day as well). Very confusing for the reader.

Figure 1- may not be necessary. Does not provide much information for the reader and is not labeled correctly.

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.