Reviewer’s report

Title: Energy, nutrient and food content of snacks in French adults

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Reviewer: Paulina Correa-Burrows

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting study which describes the main features of snacking behaviors among French adults. The study is relevant because snacking is a major contributor to excess weight gain and poor cardiometabolic health. The fact that the analysis was performed in a cohort of over 100,000 participants which were recruited to match the French adult of population is a major strength of the study. However, the analysis is too descriptive for my taste. Because the cohort certainly has good information on sociodemographic variables, I missed associations with those variables. The French population is far from being homogeneous and differences must exist at the food behavior level. I’d like the authors could dig deeper ion those differences, which I am sure will add to the paper.

Abstract

Please, include range or mean age of participants along with gender distribution.

Use brackets to report mean values since you have normal parenthesis to report standard deviations.

Introduction

Line 16. By American study, did you mean a study conducted in the US?

Methods

I’d rearrange this section. First I’d call the first subsection 'Sample and study design'. This comprises lines 32-40 plus lines 87-93 (which is currently in the Statistical analysis subsection).
Next, in the second subsection I'd describe the assessment of the dietary behavior. This goes from line 48-59, only. A third subsection would be used to report the definitions of meals and eating occasions as used in the analysis. This is currently done in lines 61-85.

Estimations of energy intake, energy density and nutrient density should be reported separately from the statistical analysis subsection.

Statistical analysis: report how the variables were described and how were estimated associations with sociodemographic variables, such as gender, age-group, educational level, ethnicity, migratory status, etc. I strongly recommend performing those associations to show how those features impact or do not impact on snacking behavior. The findings would be of interest to the scientific community and also to health practitioners and policymakers.

Results
Because I'm suggesting to broaden the analysis to include associations with sociodemographic variables, this section is going to change greatly. I just have one observation. The authors excluded a subset of participants, but nothing is said about differences between the final sample and those excluded from the analysis. Did you have the chance to compare both groups? I'd also suggest including a Table to describe the sample overall or controlled by a variables (e.g. gender, age group, …).

Discussion
I missed a subsection about implications of the findings for practice and policymaking.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:
- An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:
- Needs some language corrections before being published
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