Author’s response to reviews

Title: Examination of Dietary Habits Among the Indigenous Kuna Indians of Panama

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Author’s response to reviews:

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Dear Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide modifications to our paper based on comments made by the reviewers. We addressed all concerns in the manuscript, highlighted the changes in the updated manuscript, and have responded to each below. We hope that these changes are acceptable and look forward to the publication of the manuscript.
Reviewer #1: All the review feedback have been attended and acceptable.

Thank you.

Reviewer #3: Thank you for addressing the reviewers queries. They have mostly been addressed satisfactorily but minor amendments and clarifications are still required.

Introduction:

1. The previous reviewer queried the lack of information in your introduction on the current environments, lifestyles, and health outcomes of this population. While you have justified why this has not been included, it would be beneficial to include a statement in your introduction that states this type of data is currently lacking in this population. This further justifies the need for your study.

We have added this phrasing to the introduction on page 4, lines 91-93 to clarify the lack of information and further justify the need for the study.

Methods:

2. You have partly addressed the lack of detail on dietary assessment method but this could be further highlighted. Please include a statement at the start of the data collection section which details that your survey was a food frequency questionnaire?

We have added phrasing to the start of the outcomes section within the Methods to specify that data was collected through a validated food frequency questionnaire. Please see page 6, lines 128-129.

3. Statistical analysis: There are some inconsistencies between your statistical analysis section and the reporting of your results/tables which makes interpretation of your findings difficult. You state in the statistical analysis section that you conducted chi2 however, everywhere else you refer to correlations which are not mentioned in your statistical analysis section. Please clarify and amend as needed. We apologize for this oversight.
We have replaced reference to correlations with ‘unadjusted relationship’ to ensure clarity. Please see Page 9, line 208, Page 12, line 303, and page 20, line 464.

Results:

4. As mentioned in methods, there are some inconsistencies with the type of statistical analysis methods you have used. Lines 204 onwards discusses correlations which are not reported in your methods. I assume correlated is not the correct terminology to be used throughout the results section and in Table 3. Please amend or provide further detail to clarify.

The reviewer is correct, this has been amended to specify relationship in both the results section and table. Please see Page 9, line 208, Page 12, line 303, and page 20, line 464.

5. In relation to Table 3, as many of your variables have more than two categories (except gender), when you have a significant p-value, we do not know which groups there is a statistical difference between. Much of your written results suggest you have shown that e.g. the poor income group consume more fish. While they do have a larger proportion in this category, as it is currently, Table 3 does not support this as a statistically significant difference. Please amend results and Table 3 to reflect this.

We have amended the summary of results to state that significant differences existed between categories based on the p-values <0.05, and have removed specifying which of the categories was higher since the difference is based on all categories considered together. Please see page 9, lines 209-214.

Discussion/Limitations:

6. While I can see you have highlighted your reasoning for not detailing a sampling frame in the methods section, this is still not reported in the limitations section.

We have specified this as a limitation. Please see page 12, lines 290-293.

7. While you have included a limitation statement regarding potential for wrong categorization of food groups, it would be of benefit to include more detail on the groups that may be more likely to be incorrectly categorized e.g. fast food, fried food, vegetables.

We added detail to this limitation. Please see page 12, lines 284-287.
Tables/Figures:

8. Figure 2 is probably sufficient without also needing Table 2.

We have removed Table 2, renumbered, Table 3 and 4, and added the confidence intervals that were reported in Table 2 into the results section. Please see page 8-9, lines 202-207.

9. Table 3: Please be more descriptive in the title of what is being reported in this table. Is it chi2 analysis to determine if the frequency/proportion of subjects consuming daily food groups differs between socio-demographic variables?

The title for this table has been updated. Please see page 20, line 464.

Sincerely,

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