Author’s response to reviews

Title: Parent–child cooking meal together may relate to parental concerns about the diets of their toddlers and preschoolers: a cross-sectional analysis in Japan

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Author’s response to reviews:

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Original title: Parent–child cooking meal together may alleviate parental concerns about the diets of their toddlers and preschoolers: a cross-sectional analysis in Japan

New title: Parent–child cooking meal together may relate to parental concerns about the diets of their toddlers and preschoolers: a cross-sectional analysis in Japan

Authors: Midori Ishikawa; Kumi Eto; Miki Miyoshi; Tetsuji Yokoyama; Mayu Haraikawa; Nobuo Yoshiike

Thank you for the editorial and peer reviewer comments on our manuscript. Please find attached a revision of the manuscript, changed to reflect the comments made by the reviewers. Changes to the text are marked in red. Our point-by-point responses to the comments are listed below.
Reviewer reports:

Reviewer #1:
Comment
The current manuscript is clearer. Related to my previous comment on the word "normalization" I agree that the authors choose to use the different wording to explain the models development through adjustment steps. Because the word "normalization" usually refer to data normalization method such as using log transformation to make the data normally distributed before the analysis, which is not the case in here.

Response
Thank you for the suggestion.

Reviewer #2:
Comment
Lines 171-173
In the "not cooking together" group, the proportions of "picky eating (eating only certain foods)" (p = 0.034), "playing with food/utensils eating a meal while eating" (p = 0.007), and "he/she eats too much" (p = 0.036) were higher than in the "cooking together" group.

The proportion of those agreeing to the concern ‘he/she eats too much’ is LOWER in the not cooking together group than the cooking together group. Therefore the sentence should be:

“In the “not cooking together” group, the proportion of parents agreeing to the concern about their children “picky eating (eating only certain foods)” (p = 0.034) and “playing with food/utensils eating a meal while eating” (p = 0.007) was higher, and “he/she eats too much” (p = 0.036) was lower, than in the “cooking together” group.”

Response
We apologize for the error in this sentence. We have revised the sentence as follows:

Lines 171–174
In the “not cooking together” group, the proportion of parents agreeing to the concern about their children “picky eating (eating only certain foods)” (p = 0.034) and “playing with food/utensils eating a meal while eating” (p = 0.007) was higher, and “he/she eats too much” (p = 0.036) was lower, than in the “cooking together” group.
Associate editor:

Comment

There is still incorrect language used regarding the description of the results. In the results in both the abstract and the main article when describing results from the Table 3 and 4 please refrain from using words such as ‘alleviated’ and ‘increased’ as this suggests that there was a significant change by introducing cooking together. However, this is a cross-sectional analysis only looking at differences between 2 groups and not assessing change. Therefore the results can only be reported as being ‘higher’ or ‘lower’ e.g. “The concerns of ‘picky eating’ and ‘playing with food/utensils while eating’ were lower, while ‘eating too much’ was higher in the parent-cooking together group. So whilst in the conclusion the authors can speculate that cooking together may alleviate or increase these factors, this would have to be tested in intervention or experimental studies to explore that further.

Please amend throughout: Line 25-26. Line 201

Response

Reviewers provided several suggestions about the description. We have, therefore, changed the title and some statements as follows.

Title

Parent–child cooking meal together may relate to parental concerns about the diets of their toddlers and preschoolers: a cross-sectional analysis in Japan

Lines 25–26

The concerns of “picky eating” and “playing with food/utensils while eating” were lower, while “eating too much” was higher in the parent-cooking together group.

Lines 32–34

Cooking a meal together with a child may be related to the parent’s lower concerns about the dietary habits of the child, including “picky eating” and “playing with food/utensils while eating,” but may also be related to the higher concerns of “eating too much.”

Line 60–63

Nevertheless, relatively few studies have investigated the influence of parent–child cooking activities at home on the dietary behaviors of children and whether such activities may relate to parental concerns regarding the dietary habits of young children [6].

Line 64–65
We hypothesized that “a parent cooking meals together with a young child” may relate to parental concerns about the dietary habits of their children, such as…

Lines 196–202

Our study results confirmed that parents and children cooking meals together was associated with a lack of concern about children “picky eating” or “playing with food/utensils while eating,” but these parents were more likely to be concerned about children “eating too much” compared with parents who did not cook a meal together with their children. Thus, while in the conclusion we can speculate that cooking together may alleviate or increase the concerns of parents, this would have to be tested in interventional or experimental studies to explore it further.

Lines 278-280

Cooking a meal together with a child may be related to the parent’s lower concerns about the dietary habits of the child, including “picky eating” and “playing with food/utensils while eating,” but may also be related to the higher concerns of “eating too much.”

Comment

Line 174 - this is not an assessment of ‘eliminating’ parental concerns, Table 4 simply lists associations between a lack of parental concern about eating behaviours in parents who reported ‘cooking together’ compared to ‘not cooking together’.

Response

Thank you for your comment.

We have changed the statement as follows:

Lines 175–176

Table 4 shows the results of the associations between “parental concerns about the diets of the child” and “parent and child cooking together” using step-wise multivariate analysis.

Comment

Line 194-196: It would be more accurate to consistently refer to the eating behaviours as parental concern for picky eating, playing with utensils etc, as that is what was assessed – not the
presence of the behaviours themselves. Furthermore as this sentence is a summary of the main results the direction of the results should be clearly identified. My suggestion for the amendment to this sentence is: “Our study results confirmed that parents and children cooking meals together was associated with a lack of concern about children ‘picky eating’ or ‘playing with food/utensils while eating’, but these parents were more likely to be concerned about children ‘eating too much’ compared with parents who did not cook a meal together.”

Response

Lines 196–202

Thank you for your suggestion.

We have changed the statement as follows”

Our study results confirmed that parents and children cooking meals together was associated with a lack of concern about children “picky eating” or “playing with food/utensils while eating,” but these parents were more likely to be concerned about children “eating too much” compared with parents who did not cook a meal together with their children. Thus, while in the conclusion we can speculate that cooking together may alleviate or increase the concerns of parents, this would have to be tested in interventional or experimental studies to explore it further.

Comment

Line 244 needs a reference

Response

Thank you for your comment. We have added the reference as follows:

Lines 242–244

The group of cooking together exhibited more frequent intake of fish, soy/soy products, vegetables, and milk, which were reported to have a low intake frequency in the “National nutrition survey on preschool children” in Japan [5].

Reference


Comment

Line 245: “This study…” Which study? With the reference (35) at the end of this sentence I assume the authors are referring to the study described in reference 35? In which case the authors should start the sentence with “In a study by XX it has been shown that….”. However, if referring to their own study then please refer to “Our study or The current study” and if this is the case then why is there a reference after the sentence?

Line 246: If now reporting results from a separate study please be really clear about this. “Previous studies have shown that….”

Response

Thank you for your suggestions.

We have changed the statements according to your comments as follows:

Lines 245–248

Our study showed that parent–child cooking a meal together was related to adequate food intake, including tasting a diversity of foods. In a study by Allirot X et al., it was showed that involving children in cooking can increase their willingness to taste novel foods and direct food choices towards foods containing vegetables [35].

Comment

Line 248-249: “additionally this study…..” Again which study are the authors referring to? The way it is written it reads as though they are referring to either reference 35 or 36?

Throughout the discussion please refrain from just referring to studies as ‘this study’ as it is not clear to the reader which study the authors are talking about. Refer to the study reported in the manuscript as ‘our study or the current study’ and other studies as something like ‘previous studies or other research’ This will then clearly denote what the authors are referring to in the discussion

Response

Thank you for your suggestions.

We have changed the statements according to your comments as follows:

Lines 250–251
Our study identified that parent–child cooking a meal together at home could be important for healthy food intake by children.

Lines 256

Based on the results of our study, interventions to support parent–child cooking a meal together may be effective.

Lines 259–262

In the present study, parent–child cooking together was related to dietary habits of children and food intake, but the behavioral factors of parents related to the eating behaviors of children were not analyzed.