**Reviewer’s report**

**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

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 31 May 2019

**Reviewer:** Rebecca Clarke

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The authors present the findings of a study examining the relationship between parents and children cooking together, parental concerns around child eating behaviours and child diet intake. The authors highlight the importance of understanding and improving infant eating behaviours with a concise review of how eating habits developed early in life can affect health going into adulthood. The authors wish to extend previous literature which has found parental reports of concerns around child's dietary habits and how nutrition education can improve a child's diet. Although this is an interesting study, I believe it could be improved by addressing the following concerns:

1) Results reported in the text are not consistent with that displayed in the tables and need to be reviewed. The authors state that the proportions of "he/she is a picky eater", "he/she plays with food/utensils while eating" and "he/she eats too much" are higher in the "cooking together" group than the "not cooking together" group (page 9-10, line 170-172). Table 3 shows that the percentage of concerns for "he/she is a picky eater" and "he/she plays with food/utensils while eating" are significantly higher in the "not cooking together" group.

2) The conclusion (page 13, line 258-259) states that cooking a meal with one's child may alleviate concerns around the child eating too much. As Table 3 shows that the percentage of concerns around the child eating too much is significantly higher in the "cooking together" group, the conclusion may need to be reviewed.

3) Greater clarification and justification of analyses are needed as it is not clear from the text. A) The authors do not explain what type of analysis was used for the participant demographic data (page 7, line 128). B) The authors state that they used "univariate analysis for each of the 11 concerns using a logistic regression model" (page 7, line, 130) and "stepwise univariate analysis" (page 10, line 173). Stepwise logistic regression and univariate analysis are different analyses. Univariate analysis is a single variable assessment and a stepwise approach cannot be used because of it.
4) Some clarification is needed around the methodology. A) The authors list child eating
behaviours (page 6, line 100-106) and state "for all questions, the parent answered with a
'yes' or a 'no'" (page 6, line 100-106). Reporting the question or statement prior to the
listed child eating behaviours would help improve reproducibility of methodology and
understanding. B) The authors state that nutritional status of the children is determined
based on the child's reported height and weight data. However, the calculation reported
(page 7, line 118-119) only uses the child's weight to determine the nutritional status
categories. It is unclear how height is used. C) I would like to offer the recommendation
to rephrase the category "tendency to be fat" (page 7, line 120) to "tendency to be
overweight" so that it is in line with how it is reported in Table 2 ("overweight
tendency").

5) The study hypothesis is that "'a parent cooking meal together with the young child' might
alleviate his/her concerns pertaining to the diets of their children… as well as their food
intake." The authors state that there is limited research examining the parent-child
relationship and alleviating parental concerns around child diet so far (page 3, line 51-53). Examples of these studies would help the reader to understand how the present
research study furthers existing knowledge and why it is important to alleviate parental
concerns around child diet. A clear link is made between how lessons on cooking can
improve child diet and food intake, however the link between parental concerns and child
eating behaviour/child diet intake is unclear.

6) The authors discuss wider research in the discussion, however the results from this study
are underemphasised in relation to prior research (page 11-12). The importance of
researching parental concerns and cooking a meal together not made clear.

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