Reviewer’s report

Title: Cultural differences in food and shape related attitudes and eating behavior are associated with differences of Body Mass Index in the same food environment: A cross-sectional study of Kiribati and European seafarers on merchant ships. Results from the Seafarer Nutrition Study.

Version: 0  Date: 11 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Gloriana Rodriguez-Arauz

Reviewer’s report:

I think the paper presents valuable results. Cross cultural comparisons in weight perception and their relationship with BMI and overeating are important to understand the obesity phenomenon in a wider sense. However, I see serious flaws in the description of this paper's hypotheses and results.

Comments for paper:

Introduction: The introduction is very concise, but it is not clear to me what the main hypotheses are and what are their direction. Do the authors wish to explore cross-cultural differences just for the sake of it, or what is the rationale? It is important that the hypotheses are clearly defined so they guide the analyses.

Methods: in line 50 of the Methods section, the authors state that 5 women, 4 Africans and 1 person of Asian origin were excluded of analyses due to "statistical reasons". It is implied that the participants were excluded due to gender and ethnicity issues but it is not clear. It is suggested that the authors rephrase this sentence to state the specific reason for exclusion of these participants.

Measures: In the description of the measures, the last sentence states "A sample of the answers and their categorizations was 20 crosschecked by a second rater to ensure the reproducibility of this process." If a second rater was used to check the ratings of the first rater, it is important that the authors provide some reliability coefficient analysis that shows that these raters in fact agreed. There is no mention of how the agreement between the raters was measured objectively; it is strongly suggested that the authors include this.

Results section: This section is the one that I find most lacking in clarity. It is unclear to me how is it justified to conduct multiple regression analyses. There is no mention of what are the predictors, what is the outcome, if the regression was simultaneous or hierarchical? Why are these analyses better than to conduct simple correlational analyses?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No
Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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