Author’s response to reviews

Title: Familial aggregation and socio-demographic correlates of taste preferences in European children

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Author’s response to reviews:

Thank you for the opportunity to revise this manuscript. We have taken the reviewers’ comments into consideration. Our responses are given below.

Reviewer reports:

Reviewer 2: The authors use an age cut-off of 12 years to distinguish between children and adolescents. This is a very imprecise way to do so. They may for instance use Tanner puberty stages to classify the participants as children or adolescents. If the authors do not have access to these data, they may at least mention the limitations of their approach.
Thank you very much for this suggestion. Unfortunately we do not have data on pubertal status for all study participants, but in a sub-sample (n=7123 children). Using information on breaking of the voice (for boys) and onset of menarche (for girls), a proportion of 84% of children classified as pubertal were ≥12 years old and only 11% of children classified as pubertal were <12 years.

In an even smaller sub-sample (n=5286) we have information available for Tanner stages according to pubic hair (for boys) and breast development (for girls). According to this measurement 97% of prepubertal children were <12 years and 95% of pubertal children were ≥12 years old.

We therefore assume that the cut-off of 12 years seems to be reasonable. Furthermore, we also aim at reflecting social aspects rather than biological factors of taste preference. Therefore, this age cut-off to our opinion seems well suited. We hope the reviewer agrees.