Reviewer’s report

Title: Public awareness and perception of Ghana's restrictive policy on fatty meat, as well as preference and consumption of meat products among Ghanaian adults living in the Kumasi Metropolis

Version: 0 Date: 14 Jul 2017

Reviewer: Seth Adu-Afarwuah

Reviewer’s report:

This manuscript presents the results of a cross-sectional study in which authors sought to assess perceptions about, and potential impact of, a policy restricting the importation of various meat products, which was implemented in Ghana in the early 1990s. I have the following comments:

Major comments

1) The title with "....perception of impact" ....."and its impact on...." is confusing. I suggest authors should re-word.

2) Abstract:
   a. Line 28-30 is not really an objective, but a description of what was done with the sample. The sentence itself seems awkward and not easily understandable. Authors should state the objective of the study more clearly.
   b. Line 39: Here and elsewhere, please write P=0.000 as P<0.001.
   c. Lines 44-45: It is unclear what these percentages refer to. Are these not the same people being referred to by the 67.1% in Line 43?
   d. Line 47: What are these percentages referring to? Is it the participants or how available/cheap imported meat products are? Please re-word the sentences in a clearer way.
   e. Conclusion: First, I do not think the first sentence of the conclusion is related to the supposed objectives of the study. Second, I think authors overstated the possible impact of the observed good level of public aware, strong support and positive attitude, etc. If anything, these can only contribute to addressing obesity, but cannot by themselves "address the obesogenic food environment.....".

3. Line 132-135: As said for the abstract, these are really not objectives, but a description of what was done.
4. Line 157-164: Authors should describe the random selection of participants more clearly. For the benefit of readers, what is the size (e.g., in sq km, number of houses or population) of a typical suburb included in this study? How were the 30 participants in a suburb randomly selected out of the population in a suburb? Were there any exclusion criteria?

5. Line 165-166: The sample size calculation seems inadequate to me. A power of 80% to detect what? What is the calculation based on? Why is precision or margin or error missing for this type of study?

6. Discussion: The discussion could be improved, and authors should avoid repeating what was said in the results: For example, the first paragraph just repeats the results, and appears unrelated to the study objectives. Also please see the repeats of the results in Lines 279-281, 294-295, 302-304, 308-310, and 317-320. Much of the conclusion (Lines 333-340) also repeats what was already said in the results. In Line 328-329, I don't know what associations were tested in the analysis.

7. Table 2: Is the last column (labeled "Total") showing p-values? Was it an objective to compare the body composition of males versus females? I suggest there should be no such comparison/hypothesis testing here.

8. Table 3: Please summarize this table or make it more concise -- I don't think that repeating the questions here (e.g., If yes, why?......; If no, why....) is helpful.

9. Table 6: Showing these numbers for weekly, fortnightly, monthly, and occasionally (unless there is a special reason for it) is boring and uninformative. It seems to me that simply showing percentages who consume (weekly/fortnightly/monthly/occasionally) versus those who Never consume would be much simpler and yet serve the same purpose.

10. Table 7: Please indicate in the title, etc., that these are participants' perceptions. Also, most (>72%) of the participants were aged 18-35 years. This means that in the early 1990's (almost 27 years ago) when Ghana implemented the meat restriction policy, a large number of the participants were very young or not even born, and therefore did not know what the situation was then concerning meat. So, how appropriation is it to interview such people about the outcome or impact of the policy? Also please check the row percentages, e.g., why are the percentages in the first row 102.8 (substantially greater than 100)?

11. Table 8: I am concerned that this categorization may lead to spurious findings: for those participants (e.g., <25 y old) who were born after Ghana implemented the policy, we cannot say what type of meat they ate then (before the policy) compared to what they eat now...... Also, I don't know how mean percentage muscle mass (yes/no) and whether or not participants consider fat content of meat are related to the policy.

Major comments
1) Line 141-145: I think authors should not repeat Line 132-135 here.

2) Line 156: Please spell out KNUST in full at first mention.

3) Line 166: What is meant by "public aware here? Is it the participant's level of awareness, or what the participant thinks is the level of the public's awareness?

4) Line 169: Please spell out FFQ in full at first mention.

5) Line 169: What is the standard layout for FFQs?

6) Line 204: It is not clear what the "health profession (50%)" means in this sentence.

7) Line 287: Please check the 960%

**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.

Yes

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

No

**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 am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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