

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Sugar Sweetened Beverages Coverage in the British Media – An Analysis of Public Health Advocacy versus Pro-Industry Messaging
AUTHORS	Elliott-Greem, Alex; Hyseni, Lirije; Lloyd-Williams, Ffion; Bromley, Helen; Capewell, Simon

VERSION 1 - REVIEW

REVIEWER	Catriona Bonfiglioli, PhD University of Technology, Sydney
REVIEW RETURNED	22-Feb-2016

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>It was a pleasure to review this interesting manuscript which presents a very useful analysis of UK news media coverage of soft drinks, apparently the first analysis of British news on this topic. This paper offers an important contribution to the study of news media representations of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs). The study appears well designed and conducted and the presentation is clear, interesting, and mostly complete and well-referenced. There are a number of minor improvements which should be made before publication.</p> <p>Please see my suggestions below.</p> <p>While the authors point out the uniqueness of their paper, and in many senses it is unique (I have not located a similar study of UK newspaper coverage of SSB), there are four highly relevant papers which should be referred to so the authors can compare their results with previous analyses of news coverage of sugar sweetened beverages/tax:</p> <p>Bonfiglioli, C. Hattersley, L. & King, L. (2011) 'Australian print news media coverage of sweet, non-alcoholic drinks sends mixed health messages' Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 35(4): 325–330</p> <p>Donaldson, WA. Cohen, JE, Truant, PL, Rutkow, L. Kanarek, NF. Barry, CL. (2015) News Media Framing of New York City's Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Portion-Size Cap. American Journal of Public Health 105:(11): 2202-2209.</p> <p>Read More: http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2012.301023</p> <p>Niederdeppe, J., Gollust, SE., Jarlenski, MP., Nathanson, AM. & Barry, CL. (2013) News Coverage of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Taxes: Pro- and Antitax Arguments in Public Discourse. American Journal of Public Health: 103 (6): e92-e98. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2012.301023</p>
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	<p>Nixon, L., Mejia, P., Cheyne, A., Dorfman, L. (2015) Big Soda's long shadow: news coverage of local proposals to tax sugar-sweetened beverages in Richmond, El Monte and Telluride Critical Public Health, 25 (3): 333-347</p> <p>Although I have selected YES to the question about appropriate and up to date referencing I believe this paper should include some mention of these four papers which are highly relevant.</p> <p>The study is presented as an analysis of news coverage of sugar sweetened beverages however the paper often discusses the coverage, slant towards, and framing of sugar. Was a separate coding conducted on sentences which discussed sugar or is this a shorthand for sugar sweetened beverages? See, for example, Line 45-46 on Page Eight and Page 11, Lines 11-12. This is important because policy responses to excess sugar consumption might or might not focus on sugary drinks, perhaps provoking greater or lesser resistance from the beverage industry. See, for example, Page Nine, Line 37 -- is the proposed tax going to be on sugar or on sugary drinks? I suggest making it clearer in the introduction, methods and results sections when the analysis is focused on SSB and when on sugar.</p> <p>ABSTRACT Line 36 - Where the authors note that SSBs were "heavily featured" in the news -- no comparison is provided to measure the quantity of coverage compared with another (health) topic. Suggest change to "frequently published" or similar. If there is time, a brief set of comparison data could be provided -- use the same set of newspapers and time period, choose a comparable/contrastable health issue to allow comparison of quantity of coverage. So, for example, is this coverage greater than or less than coverage of "measles" OR "breast cancer" OR "trans fats"?</p> <p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>Page Three Lines 14-16 - Please spell out abbreviations at first use. PHE - Public Health England is not mentioned in full until the references. SACN - Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition -- is not properly introduced until Page Nine. Line 57 - The specialist term "agenda setting" is introduced without explanation - this is a media theory - see, for example: McCombs, M. and D. Shaw (1972). 'The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media.' Public Opinion Quarterly 36(2): 176-187. McCombs, M. and S. Valenzuela (2007). 'The Agenda-Setting Theory.' Cuadernos de Información 2007(20): 44-50.</p> <p>Page Four Line 4 to 5 - The specialist term "framing" is introduced without explanation -- then lines 52 to 53 of Page Six refer to causes and solutions - as Entman 1991 and 1993 make clear framing consists of defining something as a problem, identifying causes, assignment responsibility and suggesting/endorsing solutions. However, I note the authors later refer to framing scholars Menashe and Siegel who could perhaps be cited in the introduction. Iyengar 1991 is also most useful on framing responsibility.</p> <p>REFS</p>
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	<p>Entman, R. M. (1991). 'Framing US coverage of international news: contrasts in narratives of the KAL and Iran Air incidents.' <i>Journal of Communication</i> 41: 6-27.</p> <p>Entman, R. M. (1993). 'Framing: toward clarification of a fractured paradigm.' <i>Journal of Communication</i> 43(4): 51-58.</p> <p>Iyengar, S. (1991). <i>Is anyone responsible?: how television frames political issues</i>. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.</p> <p>METHODS</p> <p>Page Five Line 6-7 -- This sentence requires re-wording along these lines: "We conducted a systematic analysis of news articles focusing on SSBs published in the major national print and web editions of British newspapers." To fix logic & improve clarity. Line 45 -- Please insert comma after "fizzy drinks" to separate fizzy drinks from industry.</p> <p>Page Six The inclusion of "regulation" in the sampling strategy may have influenced the final sample by perhaps under-representing stories about, for example, the health benefits of fruit juice and over-representing the proportion of stories which include public health advocacy because calls for regulation may not be included in all articles about soft drinks and are likely usually to emanate from public health advocates. This is not a flaw in the study but should be mentioned in the limitations. Consider that: Bonfiglioli et al.'s study of news angles in soft drink news found that only 40% of articles about SSB led on industry angles (REF provided above).</p> <p>37-38 - In describing how the articles were categorised into news, editorial, etc., the authors include the category "Opinion pieces by journalist" -- Please note Opinion pieces are often NOT by journalists - Did the authors check authorship? If not, I advise deleting the phrase "by journalist". This is important because opinion pieces are often written by non-journalists, advocates or lobbyists who are taking one side in a debate. Line 48-49 - Authors note they adapted Pollock's prominence method but do not describe in what way they adapted it. How did they measure prominence online. Line 49-50 - Slant - Reference to Pollock 2014 needed here. HOW was slant measured? Can the authors provide examples of sentences coded as pro- and anti- SSB? Pro- and anti-sugar? Etc..</p> <p>Page Eight Line 9-10 and 31-32 - STYLE - Should newspaper titles be italicized here? And throughout? Line 16-19 - Topics - Are all the articles about "health impacts" concerned with health harms and risks? Or are some about health benefits? Line 26-28 - Can the authors provide examples of sentences which framed sugar as bad? Line 37 - How was individual responsibility framing detected? Can the authors provide an example sentence from the sample? Line 37 - Punctuation -- Delete apostrophe from newspapers (first use)</p> <p>Page 10 An interesting and important discussion. It would be good if statements such as "many brands" (Line 18); "most denied" (line 31-</p>
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	<p>32); etc., could be quantified to provide some sense of scale. Was this two out of three or 15 out of 16 or ... ? Also, when referring to "many brands" does this mean the articles quoted spokespeople for those brands?</p> <p>Lines 27-33 - Where quotes are provided please include the source of the article from which the quotation was obtained (newspaper, date, headline, and page number if available)</p> <p>Line 37-38 - Tesco example could be sourced to the newspaper articles from which this evidence is garnered.</p> <p>Page 11 Line 31-32 - What is the "responsibility deal"?</p> <p>Page 12 Line 26-27 - Insert an apostrophe after "companies" (before "marketing").</p> <p>Page 14 Line 9 - Word missing - insert "beverages" after "sugar sweetened".</p> <p>Page 20 Figure THREE Axis labels require clarification (Names of bars to be made visible) -- suggest separate this into TWO figures one for sugar and one for industry.</p> <p>Page 22 Figure FIVE Appears to repeat figure THREE - please insert correct graph ENDS</p>
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REVIEWER	Laura Nixon Berkeley Media Studies Group Berkeley, CA, USA
REVIEW RETURNED	15-Mar-2016

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>Please note: My expertise is not in statistics. A reviewer with a strong statistics background should confirm the statistical analyses presented. I am also not an expert in message testing methods.</p> <p>This study examined media coverage of sugar sweetened beverage debates in mainstream British print newspapers and their websites to assess the prominence of pro and anti messaging about SSBs.</p> <p>In the Introduction, the second sentence ("In young people...junk foods.") is somewhat unclear – do you mean that among young people, to a greater extent than for other age groups, excessive sugar is mostly consumed in the form of soda/juice/junk foods? Consider revising for greater clarity. In addition, the authors assert that "The UK is progressing towards a tax on SSBs," but there is no evidence provided that this is the case. This statement needs to be qualified and/or citations should be included. It would also be helpful to include a definition of media advocacy in the introduction, since it is brought up later, in the Discussion section.</p> <p>In the Methods section, there is some repetition between the "Piloting and Selection of Search Terms" and the "Study design & search strategy" sections (i.e. dates included, Nexis database,</p>
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	<p>description of search terms) that could be streamlined, In addition, it might be valuable to briefly mention why 2014 was determined as a crucial time in regards to public health advocacy on sugary drinks. Finally, the article selection and inclusion criteria was not clear. Initially, the authors state that articles needs to “have at least one paragraph relating to the regulation of sugar or the food industry.” However, in the next paragraph it appears that the criteria was broader, encompassing “regulation, controls or guidance, or the role of sugar within beverages, or the food industry opinion or rhetoric with regards to these products in terms of advertisements.” In the results, the authors state that the majority of articles analyzed did not suggest policy changes as a response, and it’s unclear how that could be the case if a criteria for inclusion was that articles contained at least a paragraph about regulation of sugar or the food industry.</p> <p>In the Results section, it could be helpful to more consistently include frequency/percentages for the results that are described, rather than just saying “most,” “often,” etc. On page 9, you include a quote from “Professor Sattar” – either include additional identifying information about this person, or simply refer to them as “a professor.” Also on page 9, you mention that obesity was the most discussed health effect, but it is discussed last after diabetes and CVD – would it make more sense to present them in order of frequency?</p> <p>In the Industry-Friendly Messaging section, there needs to be a clearer distinction made between what the press does, and what the food industry says/does. More specificity is needed, for example, in the first sentence, which asserts that the British Press promoted a healthy lifestyle, increasing physical activity, etc. Was it the food industry, quoted in the press, that promoted these things, or was it the press itself? In addition, how did the British Press do this? Did they publish unsigned editorial espousing healthy lifestyles? Did the op-eds that they chose to publish tend to hold these views? Did they publish quotes from the food industry in straight news articles that put forward that perspective? Throughout this section, more specificity and nuance along those lines would be helpful.</p> <p>In the Discussion, you present new data on reformulation in the news (page 11, 2nd paragraph) that was never discussed in the results. This paragraph should be moved to the results, presumably on page 9 under “Agenda setting.” On page 12, there is information about the evidence for soda taxes (ln 6-ln 41). This should be moved to the Introduction. In addition, when discussing how junk food and soda taxes have been proved to have public health benefits, consider including evidence from Mexico's recent tax, as those results are very timely and have garnered international attention.</p> <p>In your Strengths and Weaknesses section, the second paragraph (“The growing rate...other topics.”) feels out of place. It may be better suited for the introduction.</p> <p>In your Conclusions section, you could include more citations to legitimize your claims about public health media advocacy's potential to influence policy and practice.</p> <p>General notes: The entire piece could benefit from a thorough copy edit to resolve some repetition, syntax, and spelling issues.</p>
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

REVIEWER 1

Catriona Bonfiglioli, PhD
University of Technology, Sydney

Please state any competing interests or state 'None declared':
None declared.

Please leave your comments for the authors below

It was a pleasure to review this interesting manuscript which presents a very useful analysis of UK news media coverage of soft drinks, apparently the first analysis of British news on this topic.

This paper offers an important contribution to the study of news media representations of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs). The study appears well designed and conducted and the presentation is clear, interesting, and mostly complete and well-referenced.

Thank you.

There are a number of minor improvements which should be made before publication.

Please see my suggestions below.

While the authors point out the uniqueness of their paper, and in many senses it is unique (I have not located a similar study of UK newspaper coverage of SSB), there are four highly relevant papers which should be referred to so the authors can compare their results with previous analyses of news coverage of sugar sweetened beverages/tax:

Bonfiglioli, C. Hattersley, L. & King, L. (2011) 'Australian print news media coverage of sweet, non-alcoholic drinks sends mixed health messages' *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 35(4): 325–330

Donaldson, WA. Cohen, JE, Truant, PL, Rutkow, L. Kanarek, NF. Barry, CL. (2015) News Media Framing of New York City's Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Portion-Size Cap. *American Journal of Public Health* 105:(11): 2202-2209.

Read More:<http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2012.301023>

Niederdeppe, J., Gollust, SE., Jarlenski, MP., Nathanson, AM. & Barry, CL. (2013) News Coverage of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Taxes: Pro- and Antitax Arguments in Public Discourse. *American Journal of Public Health*: 103 (6): e92-e98. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2012.301023

Nixon, L., Mejia, P., Cheyne, A., Dorfman, L. (2015) Big Soda's long shadow: news coverage of local proposals to tax sugar-sweetened beverages in Richmond, El Monte and Telluride *Critical Public Health*, 25 (3): 333-347

Thank you for making us aware of these relevant papers. They are now all referred to in the Discussion in support of our research findings.

The study is presented as an analysis of news coverage of sugar sweetened beverages however the paper often discusses the coverage, slant towards, and framing of sugar. Was a separate coding conducted on sentences which discussed sugar or is this a shorthand for sugar sweetened beverages? See, for example, Line 45-46 on Page Eight and Page 11, Lines 11-12. This is important because policy responses to excess sugar consumption might or might not focus on sugary drinks, perhaps provoking greater or lesser resistance from the beverage industry. See, for example, Page Nine, Line 37 -- is the proposed tax going to be on sugar or on sugary drinks? I suggest making it clearer in the introduction, methods and results sections when the analysis is focused on SSB and when on sugar.

Thank you. We have now clarified the text to distinguish between sugar as a generic (harmful) nutrient, and sugary drinks / sugar sweetened beverages, (the main focus of this study).

ABSTRACT

Line 36 - Where the authors note that SSBs were "heavily featured" in the news -- no comparison is provided to measure the quantity of coverage compared with another (health) topic. Suggest change to "frequently published" or similar. If there is time, a brief set of comparison data could be provided -- use the same set of newspapers and time period, choose a comparable/contrastable health issue to allow comparison of quantity of coverage. So, for example, is this coverage greater than or less than coverage of "measles" OR "breast cancer" OR "trans fats"?

Thank you. We have amended the text to say "frequently published".

INTRODUCTION

Page Three

Lines 14-16 - Please spell out abbreviations at first use. PHE - Public Health England is not mentioned in full until the references. SACN - Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition -- is not properly introduced until Page Nine.

Thank you. These abbreviations have been written out in full.

Line 57 - The specialist term "agenda setting" is introduced without explanation - this is a media theory - see, for example:

McCombs, M. and D. Shaw (1972). 'The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media.' *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36(2): 176-187.

McCombs, M. and S. Valenzuela (2007). 'The Agenda-Setting Theory.' *Cuadernos de Información* 2007(20): 44-50.

Thank you. A definition for "agenda setting" has been given in the Introduction, paragraph 4.

Page Four

Line 4 to 5 - The specialist term "framing" is introduced without explanation -- then lines 52 to 53 of Page Six refer to causes and solutions - as Entman 1991 and 1993 make clear framing consists of defining something as a problem, identifying causes, assignment responsibility and suggesting/endorsing solutions. However, I note the authors later refer to framing scholars Menashe and Siegel who could perhaps be cited in the introduction. Iyengar 1991 is also most useful on framing responsibility.

REFS

Entman, R. M. (1991). 'Framing US coverage of international news: contrasts in narratives of the KAL and Iran Air incidents.' *Journal of Communication* 41: 6-27.

Entman, R. M. (1993). 'Framing: toward clarification of a fractured paradigm.' *Journal of Communication* 43(4): 51-58.

Iyengar, S. (1991). *Is anyone responsible?: how television frames political issues*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Thank you for this observation. We have now provided a definition for "framing" in the Introduction as given by Entman R.M. (1993).

METHODS

Page Five

Line 6-7 -- This sentence requires re-wording along these lines: "We conducted a systematic analysis of news articles focusing on SSBs published in the major national print and web editions of British newspapers." To fix logic & improve clarity.

Thank you. The sentence has been rewritten as suggested.

Line 45 -- Please insert comma after "fizzy drinks" to separate fizzy drinks from industry.
A comma has been added.

Page Six

The inclusion of "regulation" in the sampling strategy may have influenced the final sample by perhaps under-representing stories about, for example, the health benefits of fruit juice and over-representing the proportion of stories which include public health advocacy because calls for regulation may not be included in all articles about soft drinks and are likely usually to emanate from public health advocates. This is not a flaw in the study but should be mentioned in the limitations. Consider that: Bonfiglioli et al.'s study of news angles in soft drink news found that only 40% of articles about SSB led on industry angles (REF provided above).

Thank you for this observation. This has now been added to the Strengths and Weaknesses section.

37-38 - In describing how the articles were categorised into news, editorial, etc., the authors include the category "Opinion pieces by journalist" -- Please note Opinion pieces are often NOT by journalists - Did the authors check authorship? If not, I advise deleting the phrase "by journalist". This is important because opinion pieces are often written by non-journalists, advocates or lobbyists who are taking one side in a debate.

Thank you. The phrase "by journalist" has been deleted.

Line 48-49 - Authors note they adapted Pollock's prominence method but do not describe in what way they adapted it. How did they measure prominence online.

Thank you. Text has now been added describing how Pollock's prominence method was adapted.

Line 49-50 - Slant - Reference to Pollock 2014 needed here. HOW was slant measured? Can the authors provide examples of sentences coded as pro- and anti- SSB? Pro- and anti-sugar? Etc..
Thank you. A reference has been added and text has been included stating how slant was measured. Example sentences are provided below and can be added to methodology section if required:

Pro sugar/SSB example:

Telegraph 21/7/14

How to do cycling nutrition on the cheap; Five easy tips to cut the cost of your weekend rides, with supermarket alternatives for expensive carbohydrate bars, energy gels and sports drinks that deliver exactly the same results.

'Coca-Cola, which is high in sugar, salts, carbohydrates and caffeine, basically offers the go-to mix for long rides.'

Standard 2/1/14

Exclusive SodaStream Offer; Fresh sparkling drinks on tap this Christmas

'Whether you're looking for the perfect gift or want to show off your cocktail making skills this festive season, SodaStream is the ultimate must-have kitchen appliance for all the family'

This article promotes the benefits of SSB and sugar for helping with cycling.

Anti-sugar/ SSB examples:

Mail Online 7/114

Sugar is;the new tobacco: Health chiefs tell food giants to slash levels

'overwhelming evidence coming out about sugar-sweetened beverages and other sugar consumption links to obesity, diabetes and even cardiovascular disease'

Mail Online 25/2/14

How much hidden sugar is in YOUR diet? Study reveals that a bowl of tomato soup or natural yogurt has as much sugar as a bowl of Frosties

'Added sugar in our diet is a very recent phenomenon and only occurred when sugar, obtained from sugar cane, beet and corn, became very cheap to produce. It's a completely unnecessary part of our calorie intake: it has no nutritional value, gives no feeling of fullness and is acknowledged to be a major factor in causing obesity and diabetes both in the UK and worldwide.'

Page Eight

Line 9-10 and 31-32 - STYLE - Should newspaper titles be italicized here? And throughout?

Thank you. Newspaper titles have been italicized throughout.

Line 16-19 - Topics - Are all the articles about "health impacts" concerned with health harms and risks? Or are some about health benefits?

Thank you. Table 1 shows the slant of the articles. Only 2 articles reported upon health benefits of sugar with all other articles either being neutral or reporting the health harms/risks.

Line 26-28 - Can the authors provide examples of sentences which framed sugar as bad?

Thank you. A couple of examples have been added to the text. A full list of articles identified can be found in Appendix 1.

Line 37 - How was individual responsibility framing detected? Can the authors provide an example sentence from the sample?

Thank you. Individual responsibility was defined as: 'the predominant solution presented is for consumers to change their behaviour.'

For example: Article Independent.co.uk on 25/06/14. (See Appendix 1 for full text of article)

Drink water to cut obesity, health experts say

Although this article mentions other solutions such as sugar tax the emphasis is placed on the consumer to switch from SSB to water. This article places the responsibility to deal with the effects of SSB in the hands of the individual rather than suggesting or promoting systemic approaches such as industry modification of products or government policy.

Line 37 - Punctuation -- Delete apostrophe from newspapers (first use)

Thank you. This has been amended.

Page 10

An interesting and important discussion. It would be good if statements such as "many brands" (Line 18); "most denied" (line 31-32); etc., could be quantified to provide some sense of scale. Was this two out of three or 15 out of 16 or ... ? Also, when referring to "many brands" does this mean the articles quoted spokespeople for those brands?

Thank you. The text has been amended based upon our analysis.

The statements referred to are based on quotes from spokespeople. Therefore, "many brands" actually refers to PepsiCo Coca-cola and Inr Bru: these are the specific brands that were talking about physical activity. There is inference in many of the articles that SSBs are an acceptable part of physical activity. But specific brands aren't regularly mentioned. Therefore, the wording "many" and "most" has been removed as it is not possible to quantify.

For example: telegraph.co.uk , 26/6/14

Coca Cola in controversy over £20m anti-obesity drive; A new programme by Coca Cola to bring free fitness classes to 70 parks in Britain has come under fire from health campaigners

Fizzy drinks giant Coca-Cola has sparked controversy with new plans to fund a £20 million anti-obesity

"We have set out in the last two years that we want to play a more productive role in finding solutions to obesity; historically we would have shied away from this but we are taking a more proactive approach; this is about calories in and calories out and getting the energy balance right."

Lines 27-33 - Where quotes are provided please include the source of the article from which the quotation was obtained (newspaper, date, headline, and page number if available)

Thank you. The sources for all these quotes have been added to the text.

Line 37-38 - Tesco example could be sourced to the newspaper articles from which this evidence is

garnered.

Thank you. The article source has been added to the text.

Page 11

Line 31-32 - What is the "responsibility deal"?

Thank you. The responsibility deal is now explained and referenced.

Page 12

Line 26-27 - Insert an apostrophe after "companies" (before "marketing").

Thank you. Inserted.

Page 14

Line 9 - Word missing - insert "beverages" after "sugar sweetened".

Thank you. The word "Beverages" has been Inserted.

Page 20

Figure THREE

Axis labels require clarification (Names of bars to be made visible) -- suggest separate this into TWO figures one for sugar and one for industry.

Thank you. The figure now displays all the names of the print and online articles included. We have kept it as one Figure as we feel visually it is easier for the reader to observe and compare the slant on sugar versus the slant on industry.

Page 22

Figure FIVE

Appears to repeat figure THREE - please insert correct graph

Thank you for this observation. The correct figure has been inserted.

ENDS

REVIEWER: 2

Reviewer Name

Laura Nixon

Institution and Country

Berkeley Media Studies Group

Berkeley, CA, USA

Please state any competing interests or state 'None declared':

None declared

Please leave your comments for the authors below

Please note: My expertise is not in statistics. A reviewer with a strong statistics background should confirm the statistical analyses presented. I am also not an expert in message testing methods.

This study examined media coverage of sugar sweetened beverage debates in mainstream British print newspapers and their websites to assess the prominence of pro and anti messaging about SSBs.

In the Introduction, the second sentence ("In young people...junk foods.") is somewhat unclear – do you mean that among young people, to a greater extent than for other age groups, excessive sugar is mostly consumed in the form of soda/juice/junk foods? Consider revising for greater clarity.

Thank you. This sentence has been rewritten to clarify the message intended.

In addition, the authors assert that “The UK is progressing towards a tax on SSBs,” but there is no evidence provided that this is the case. This statement needs to be qualified and/or citations should be included.

Thank you. Since this paper was written, the UK government has made an announcement of a levy on sugary drinks equivalent to a 10% excise tax (delayed until 2018). The text has therefore been amended in response to this announcement and your observation.

It would also be helpful to include a definition of media advocacy in the introduction, since it is brought up later, in the Discussion section.

Thank you. A definition of media advocacy has been provided in the Methods section, subsection “Contextual Analysis”.

In the Methods section, there is some repetition between the “Piloting and Selection of Search Terms” and the “Study design & search strategy” sections (i.e. dates included, Nexis database, description of search terms) that could be streamlined.

Thank you. These sections have been edited to reflect this observation.

It might be valuable to briefly mention why 2014 was determined as a crucial time in regards to public health advocacy on sugary drinks.

Thank you. A sentence has been added to address this comment in the Methods section, subsection “Study design and search strategy.”

The article selection and inclusion criteria was not clear. Initially, the authors state that articles needs to “have at least one paragraph relating to the regulation of sugar or the food industry.” However, in the next paragraph it appears that the criteria was broader, encompassing “regulation, controls or guidance, or the role of sugar within beverages, or the food industry opinion or rhetoric with regards to these products in terms of advertisements.” In the results, the authors state that the majority of articles analyzed did not suggest policy changes as a response, and it’s unclear how that could be the case if a criteria for inclusion was that articles contained at least a paragraph about regulation of sugar or the food industry.

Articles were included if they met criteria 1) SSB or a synonym and 2) at least one paragraph relating to sugar or the food industry.

Articles were excluded if they focused primarily on Israel and SodaStream and artificial sweeteners. One of the prominent themes of the news at that time (2014) was SodaStream’s involvement in the Gaza strip. These articles would have meet the inclusion criteria 1 and 2. As would numerous articles relating to the use of artificial sweeteners.

The purpose of the second paragraph is to illustrate this more eloquently. We have not amended it in the text. However, if the reviewer feels this text should be included, it can be added.

In the Results section, it could be helpful to more consistently include frequency/percentages for the results that are described, rather than just saying “most,” “often,” etc.

Thank you. Percentages have been added.

On page 9, you include a quote from “Professor Sattar” – either include additional identifying information about this person, or simply refer to them as “a professor.”

Thank you. Professor Sattar’s affiliation has been added.

On page 9, you mention that obesity was the most discussed health effect, but it is discussed last after diabetes and CVD – would it make more sense to present them in order of frequency?

Thank you. The sequence has been amended.

In the Industry-Friendly Messaging section, there needs to be a clearer distinction made between

what the press does, and what the food industry says/does. More specificity is needed, for example, in the first sentence, which asserts that the British Press promoted a healthy lifestyle, increasing physical activity, etc. Was it the food industry, quoted in the press, that promoted these things, or was it the press itself? In addition, how did the British Press do this? Did they publish unsigned editorial espousing healthy lifestyles? Did the op-eds that they chose to publish tend to hold these views? Did they publish quotes from the food industry in straight news articles that put forward that perspective? Throughout this section, more specificity and nuance along those lines would be helpful. Thank you. This section has been amended to reflect these queries.

In the Discussion, you present new data on reformulation in the news (page 11, 2nd paragraph) that was never discussed in the results. This paragraph should be moved to the results, presumably on page 9 under "Agenda setting." Thank you. The sentence about reformulation has been relocated to the Results section under "Agenda Setting".

On page 12, there is information about the evidence for soda taxes (ln 6-ln 41). This should be moved to the Introduction. In addition, when discussing how junk food and soda taxes have been proved to have public health benefits, consider including evidence from Mexico's recent tax, as those results are very timely and have garnered international attention. Thank you. We have expanded the paragraph to include the evidence from Mexico's sugar tax. We have left the paragraph in the discussion section as we feel that it sits within the discussion concerning the broader global evidence concerning a sugar tax, whereas the Introduction focuses upon the UK situation and specifically the role of the UK media. However, we are happy to move it if the Editor believes it would be better placed in the Introduction. In your Strengths and Weaknesses section, the second paragraph ("The growing rate...other topics.") feels out of place. It may be better suited for the introduction. Thank you. We have left the paragraph in the Strengths and Weaknesses section, but have rewritten it to emphasise how it is a strength of the paper.

In your Conclusions section, you could include more citations to legitimize your claims about public health media advocacy's potential to influence policy and practice. Thank you. Citations has been included relating to the recent "sugary drinks tax" announcement by the UK government Chancellor (March 2016), which will come into effect in 2018.

General notes:

The entire piece could benefit from a thorough copy edit to resolve some repetition, syntax, and spelling issues.

Thank you. This has been done.

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Catriona Bonfiglioli University of Technology Sydney, Sydney, NSW, Australia
REVIEW RETURNED	09-May-2016

GENERAL COMMENTS	Thanks for the opportunity to review the revised paper. The authors have responded to the suggested emendations.
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REVIEWER	Laura Nixon Berkeley Media Studies Group United States
REVIEW RETURNED	20-May-2016

GENERAL COMMENTS	The author did a thorough job incorporating edits. The piece is grammatically sound, contains novel and interesting findings, and is generally well-written.
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