Reviewer's report

Title: Validation study of the Chinese Early Development Instrument (CEDI)

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Reviewer: James M Perrin

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript describes a clear and well-organized study to determine the reliability and validity of a (Hong Kong) Chinese version of the Early Development Instrument. The investigators recruited children from four diverse kindergartens in Hong Kong, tested the instrument (CEDI) regarding its internal consistency (via Cronbach’s alpha), its validity in comparison with a measure of early development and, in a smaller sample, the test-retest reliability of the CEDI. The findings demonstrate good results in these three tests and suggest the usefulness of this measure in Chinese communities.

A few areas merit consideration (minor essential revisions):

Page 4: How many refusals were there in subject recruitment? Would these refusals bias the sample or results?

Page 6: first full paragraph: “five developmental domains and respective sub-domains.” Not clear what the respective subdomains are. How were scores in the lowest 10th percentile determined? And what was the rationale for considering this the right cutoff for determining vulnerability?

Page 8: last line of data analysis, should be “statistically”

Page 8: rationale for limiting analysis to children born in 2005 not clear (although it likely did not change the results much). Why the female predominance in HKI?

Results: Suggest leaving the interpretation of the findings for the discussion – e.g., rather than comment here that the CEDI domains show adequate internal consistency, might just report the numbers here and interpret them in the discussion.

Page 14: First paragraph – why is the female predominance in HKI kindergarten considered the “natural” sex composition?

Ref 1: might refer to the actual report from the Board on Children and Families on Neurons to Neighborhoods rather than a New Zealand report on the report.

In summary, this paper presents a well-organized and well-written description of a clear study to document properties of a developmental measure for Chinese kindergarten age children.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

No conflict of interest.