Author's response to reviews

Title: Biological and other health related correlates of long-term life dissatisfaction burden

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Author's response to reviews: see over
We thank the reviewers for their constructive comments concerning our manuscript on long-term life satisfaction. We have addressed these comments point by point and made alterations according to them using highlighted text in our revised manuscript. We hope that these alterations have improved the manuscript and that it is now suitable for publication in BMC Psychiatry.

Sincerely,

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OUR RESPONSES TO THE EDITOR

EDITORS COMMENT 1:

As you are aware, dichotomizing continuous variables is bad statistical practice. I very much appreciate your making the effort to re-run your analyses after the reviewer raised this issue. However, I agree with the reviewer that it is not appropriate to continue to rely on a flawed analysis, even if you do add that the correct analysis does not change the results.

Therefore, I ask you explicitly to re-write your method and results sections to rely exclusively on the more appropriate analysis without dichotomization. After this final step, I am confident that the manuscript will be ready for acceptance.

RESPONSE 1:

The manuscript has now been re-written as suggested. The final results are now based on the continuous variable analysis and the text has been revised accordingly. As far as we understand, the result should be now as reliable as required. We thank the reviewer and editor for these suggestions, which improved our manuscript.

EDITORS COMMENT 2:

In principle, table 1 can stay the way it is - it is only descriptive, not inferential, after all. However, I would encourage the authors to explore whether they could present this information as a matrix of scatterplots: one scatterplot for each row of table 1, in every case plotting the variable of interest against the Long-Term Life Dissatisfaction Burden.

RESPONSE 2:

Originally, we chose to present the table 1 with a two-class variable due to the small sample size and its descriptive nature. Based on the editor’s comment, we considered using a set of scatter plots. They do have the advantage of showing the distributions, but, on the other hand, hinder the practical interpretation of the
data (due to lack of exact numerical values). Based on these considerations, we would prefer to maintain the table 1 in its present format.

OUR RESPONSES TO THE REVIEWER 2

REVIEWER 2 COMMENTS:

The authors have now re-analyzed their data as suggested, treating life dissatisfaction as a continuous variable. These new analyses confirm the previous results. 
I am a bit taken aback by the fact that instead of using and reporting their new and improved methods, and better results as a MAIN outcome, they have taken a very easy-way-out approach and just added language stating that using life dissatisfaction as a continuous variable works as well. 
I will leave it to the editors to decide whether to ask the authors for another revision. I would probably do that.

RESPONSE 3:

We thank the reviewer for his repeated suggestions. We feel that they improved our manuscript and made the results more reliable. The manuscript has now been re-written in order to rely on the continuous variable analysis. Due to readability and practical odds ratios of logistic regression we were stuck to them, but this solution is very fine, now. Thank you. (c.f. response 1 and 2 to the editor)