Reviewer's report

Title: Early life factors and being overweight at 4 years of age among children in Malmo, Sweden

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Reviewer: Katrina Giskes

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This manuscript uses data from a large sample to understand the determinants of overweight/obesity among 4-year old children. Overweight/obesity is a significant public health issue, and this paper provides some interesting insights into a range of genetic/environmental factors that young children may have been exposed to and their subsequent development of overweight/obesity. I have a number of major and minor comments.

Major comments
* The authors should state the proposed hypothesis between the range of factors examined and overweight/obesity in this age group.
* The Introduction states that no known studies have examined the potential role of a range of exposures stratified by parental weight status. However, the authors do not state why this would be important.
* In the Methods the reliability of the measures is mentioned - please specify the variables this relates to, how reliability was assessed and what were the findings of the reliability study. This would enable more confidence in the measures employed in the study.
* The Methods do not detail how children’s or parent’s overweight/obesity was assessed (i.e. by self-reported measures or by physical measures, or a combination of both?). Please be explicit about whether each of these measures were measured or self-reported.
* A range of co-variates are included in the models, however there was no rationale as to why they were included. Were they included on statistical grounds (if so, what criteria were applied?) or theoretical grounds (if so, what were the hypothesised relationships?). Given the large number of co-variates and small prevalence of obesity, this would have had implications for the power. Further, no rational is provided as to the sequential modelling strategy employed.

Minor comments
* The Introduction needs to state the case why overweight/obesity in childhood is a significant public health issue.
* Please specify what drink were included in sweetened beverages.
* Minor English corrections are required.
**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare i have no competing interests.