Reviewer's report

Title: Gender differences in a resource-demand model in the general population

Version: 2  Date: 20 May 2014

Reviewer: Anthony Montgomery

Reviewer's report:

The strengths of the article concern the population-based sample and the examination of gender effects. However, the research lacks a strong theoretical basis, and the SEM model doesn't reveal a great deal. I would reluctantly recommend for publication unless the authors could satisfactorily address the following issues:

1. Overall, the authors claim to be examining a resource-demand model. However, they never make reference to the job demand resources (J-DR) model of Demerouti et al. They either need to reference and integrate the model, or at least explain how their approach differs from the model. It will be a little confusing for readers, who will (naturally) think that they are examining the well known J-DR model.

2. The introduction does not make a strong case for gender differences in chronic stress. Indeed, the evidence presented seems to suggest the opposite, that we don't have considerable evidence of gender effects. Moreover, they didn't find any significant differences themselves.

3. On page 6, the authors state; “There is a need to clarify the pathways of gender and stress.”. It would helpful if the introduction did a better job in developing hypotheses concerning potential gender differences. Otherwise, the research feels like a bit of fishing trip (i.e., we will look for gender differences, and explain them if we find any).

4. The authors should present statistics on response rates by gender. A potential confounder in their research is that women with high levels of stress are more likely to reply to such a survey.

5. In terms of their method, it was a household interview. Where any of the men and women in their sample living in the same house?

6. On page 13, the authors state; “Moreover, most stress studies have not incorporated resource change as central mechanism in their overall models.”. It’s not clear what the authors mean by resource change, but again the work on the J-DR model has incorporated resources as a central variable in explaining burnout.

7. On page 14, the authors state; “Further results from our sample suggest that chronic work stress seems to rise and fall over the lifetime in a consistent way for both genders.” The authors should be careful here, as this sentence makes it sound as though their research was longitudinal.
8. The manuscript doesn’t include a limitations section, which is a little odd.

Minor comment

9. Overall the manuscript is well written, but it would benefit from a reread to correct various typos.

Refs for J-DR model


Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests' below