Reviewer's report

Title: Family joint activities in a cross-national perspective

Version: 2 Date: 30 March 2007

Reviewer: HELEN SWEETING

Reviewer's report:

General

Thank you for sending me the revised version of this paper. I note that the authors have responded well to most of the reviewers' comments.

I have spotted a few, mainly linguistic points, which I think should be addressed before the paper can be published on the site.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. page 4, 1st para - this is difficult to understand - please could the authors have a look at this?

2. page 4, 2nd para - spelling RECENT. Also this para suddenly introduces the idea of family process, which is more general (including relationships etc) than family time.

3. page 5, 1st para - final sentence seems to have some words missing.

4. page 9, sentence beginning 'According to the applied ...' is very difficult to understand.

5. page 11, 1st para - note that the items relate to time WITH FAMILY and not necessarily WITH PARENTS

6. page 11, final para - I do not think this has been changed as a result of the new analyses. Since GRANDPARENTS was not included in Model B, it includes 4 (not 5) factors, and there should be no description other results for grandparents.

7. page 25, heading to Table 5 - what does the little star signify?

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

I'm still just a bit worried about this use of factor scores - it seems that the most frequent items (meals and tv) have the lowest factor weightings, whereas the highest weighting is for walks, which is a much less frequent item. Does this mean that the Family Time Index is giving undue emphasis to less frequent activities?

Something which I think is interesting, but which the authors don't pick up on, is the confounding of the variables PARENTS and HOME. Those with both parents are unlikely to shift between two homes, and it is those who are moving between homes who, as might be expected, spend the lowest time in joint activities.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.