Reviewer's report

Title: Sense of coherence and attrition in cohorts of permanent and non-permanent employees

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Reviewer: Monica Eriksson

Reviewer's report:

This paper represents an interesting theme of the salutogenic concept sense of coherence. As the authors state, attrition in cohorts is a neglected aspect in study designs. To the best of my knowledge this aspect of the SOC has not been examined and described before now. The paper adds new knowledge important for further research. Further, the longitudinal study design strengthens the paper.

An overall impression is that the authors have carefully carried out the study and described the results. The sample sizes and the response rates are encouraging. The statistical methods used are relevant. The tables describing the results are clear and comprehensive. The language is adequate. The references are mainly of current interest and relevant. However, recommendations for strengthening the paper are proposed as follows:

The title: I recommend the authors to further clarify the title with its longitudinal study design i.e. ... employees: a Finnish longitudinal study with a 4-year follow-up.

The abstract: The section of methods describes in a good way the material and the procedure of the study. However, the section of methods lacks a description of the methods used, in this paper logistic regression analysis.

Page 4: The second part gives some references of the salutogenic research and its relation with health. Three of them refer to Finnish research and one to an extensive population study in UK. However, a reference to the most extensive review of the salutogenic research as measured by Antonovsky's sense of coherence scale (Eriksson M, Lindström)
Community Health 2006;60:376-381.) should have been relevant and strengthen the paper. Further, I recommend a reference also to the longitudinal Healthy Child study recently published by Heiskanen, Feldt, Leskinen (2007). This is up to now, to my knowledge, a study with the most longest follow-up period (13 years).

Page 6: I recommend the authors to complete the paper with a section of ethical consideration.

Page 14: The reference 12 should be …. in women in the EPIC-Norfolk...

Conclusions: This paper is a valuable contribution to the salutogenic research and adds new knowledge. I recommend publication after revision according to the above mentioned comments. The improvements are so marginal that it does not require another round of review. The Reviewer, though working at a research institution in Helsinki, is not familiar with the authors of this paper.

**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**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 that I have no competing interests.