Reviewer’s report

Title: Early Identification of Young Children at Risk for Poor Academic Achievement: Preliminary Development of a Parent-Report Prediction Tool

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Reviewer: Pamela Davis-Kean

Reviewer’s report:

1. Major Compulsory Revisions

This manuscript attempts to put together a risk inventory that physicians can use to determine achievement as early as 2 years of age. The authors did a good job reviewing the literature except for referencing work by Arnold Sameroff who has written extensively on the additive risk factor of children and families. Thus, these risk have already been defined in the psychological literature. It is well known that demographic variables are important for identifying risk. Indeed, poverty, is a major risk factor for both achievement and health. I would suggest that many pediatricians already have a sense of these risk when meeting with parents. Also, from multiple experience having asked these questions, income is not a variable that most parents are comfortable discussing with anyone. How would pediatricians or other clinicians approach these questions. Thus, the question for the authors is what is the contribution of this article and risk portfolio about that which already known about risk. An analysis that was more sensitive to issues of parenting and home environment may be more informative.

2. Minor Essential Revisions

Using data dummies for missing data is not the state of the art of missing data. The authors should use multiple imputations or FIML adjustments found in structural equation modeling programs to deal more effectively with the issue of missing data.

3. Discretionary Revisions

No comments

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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