Reviewer’s report

Title: The Danish Health and Morbidity Surveys: Study design and participant characteristics.

Version: 0 Date: 02 Jan 2019

Reviewer: Reviewer 2

Reviewer's report:

PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:

OBJECTIVE - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses a testable research question(s) (brief or other article types: is there a clear objective)?
Yes - there is a clear objective

DESIGN - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?
Yes - the approach is appropriate

EXECUTION - Are the experiments and analyses performed with technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?
No - there are minor issues

Statistics - Is the use of statistics in the manuscript appropriate?
No - there are issues with the statistics in the study

INTERPRETATION - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?
No - there are minor issues

OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Is the current version of this work technically sound? If not, can revisions be made to make the work technically sound?
Probably - with minor revisions

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: * What is your overall impression of the study?
This well-written manuscript titled: "The Danish Health and Morbidity Surveys: Study design and participant characteristics" describes the design and participants characteristics of population-based surveys in Denmark and adds to the literature in this less-studied area of research.

* What the authors' have done well?
The Introduction, Methods and Results Sections of the paper are well-written, succinct and coherent. The authors reviewed the literature well, provided adequate justification for the study. Study design and data analysis was clear. The Results section was informative and Tables were well-presented.

* In what ways does it not meet best practice?
I have some concerns with majorly the Discussion Section of the manuscript. Some aspects of the Results were not adequately covered in the Discussion Section.
I have identified some revisions which will help the authors improve the manuscript

REQUESTED REVISIONS:

Introduction

"Moreover, register data on health care contacts provide only information on the most serious medical conditions, for which medical treatment was necessary. This means that data on less serious cases, albeit more common in the daily life of the general population, are not included in registers (1). Thus, such information can only be revealed by means of health surveys. Moreover, in many countries, adequate official health registers are not available, and, accordingly, health surveys are the only source of data on the population's health."

Comment: Please, this section could be strengthened by the authors including the specific serious conditions that the registers capture as well as the less-serious but common conditions that population-based surveys such as this could capture.

METHODS

This section is generally well-written.

Comment: There is a need to include a paragraph on how the findings presented in the current paper was analysed/summarised.

DISCUSSION

Comment: There is a need to Discuss the implications of the very low response rate in younger individuals (16 - 24 years)

Comment: There is a need to explain or discuss whether the survey questionnaires (whether sent through postal mail or digital post) got to the selected individuals. As it is, an individual who did not receive the mail (questionnaire) for one reason or the other will be included in the non-response group.

Comment: Given the declining response rate despite using diverse approaches, and considering that individuals invited for the survey could be tracked, an important recommendation will be to
survey the "non-responders" of previous surveys in order to identify reasons for the poor response so as not to compromise the validity and generalisability of the surveys.

Limitations of the study is well written

References
The references and reference style are OK.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

As stated in the commentary above

Note: This reviewer report can be downloaded - see attached pdf file.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

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3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

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If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

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