Reviewer’s report

Title: Depressive Symptoms and Negative Life Events: What Psycho-social Factors Protect or Harm Left-behind Children in China?

Version: 1  Date: 08 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Meekyung Han

Reviewer’s report:

Again, this paper is addressing an important and understudied area and population. The revised version addressed all my previous concerns and suggestions to my satisfaction. I appreciate that the authors carefully revised the manuscript. I recommend acceptance of the revised manuscript with a few minor revisions. These suggested changes are as follow:

1. The overall writing quality seems to improved but I still think that more careful editing throughout the paper, especially the Background section and the Results section, will be helpful.

2. While appreciating the added information about how the survey has been administered, I suggest to rephrase the following sentence on page 10: "During the survey, administrators repeatedly emphasized the right to quit several times": I wonder how many students actually stopped the survey in the midst and any specific reasons for repeatedly stating this?

3. I still think that the implications of this study should be further expanded: you have listed the four recommendations to 1) governments, 2) the society, 3) schools and 4) governments. The listed recommendations seem to be vague and underdeveloped. To me, each result of your hypotheses holds important implications to mental health policies, programs, and professionals. I am hoping that the authors revise this implication in depth in order to provide suggestions that specific policies/programs the government should consider.

I believe that this study will contribute to the body of literature with mental health issues among children in China in general, with emphasis on the roles of psycho-social factors among left-behind children.

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

Yes

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

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

Yes

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 recommend additional statistical review

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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