Reviewer's report

Title: Education and employment status of adults with autism spectrum disorders in Germany – a cross-sectional-survey

Version: 0 Date: 04 Oct 2017

Reviewer: Katie Maras

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the invitation to review this manuscript, which focuses on an important area of research: adults with autism gaining and maintaining adequate employment in Germany. The authors recruited an impressive sample size of autistic adults, carefully adapted a questionnaire for this population, and adopted shrewd methods for transforming and matching participants' skills with their employment status to examine this topic. The authors report that adults with autism experienced more inadequate employment (in respect to over-education for their current role) compared to the general population. The manuscript is clear, succinct and well written, and I believe it will be of importance to the field. I have a few specific comments and suggestions, which I outline below.

- Please avoid the use of 'high-functioning', as it is felt by many in the autism community that the terms high-functioning and low-functioning are disrespectful and give a misleading portrayal of abilities (or lack thereof). For example, just because an individual is intellectually able it does not mean that they function highly (see Kenny, Hattersley, Molins et al., 2015). There is also no diagnostic category of 'high functioning' autism. Please would the authors amend this.

- The authors might also want to consider using 'autism' or 'autism spectrum disorder/ ASD' rather than Asperger syndrome, given current diagnostic criteria.

- Please amend the reference to 'patients' with HFA-AS to 'individuals' or 'people' with autism/ASD on p.5 line 7 and elsewhere (see Kenny et al., 2015).

- The sample is described as adults who received a late diagnosis, but in Table 3 at least one participant was diagnosed at age 3. Please could the authors clarify the proportion of the
sample who received a late diagnosis, and the definition of this? This should also be accurately reported throughout (e.g., not referring to the sample as 'late diagnosed adults' in the abstract, if not all of the same were).
- P.13: Please could the authors also report comparisons with the general population for the longest-practised job?
- P.17 line 13 onwards: arguably, greater flexibility and autonomy for individuals to utilise their own style of learning and working, with reduced impact of social difficulties, may also be a factor in autistic adults' higher attainment in educational contexts compared with their employment status.

Minor points and typos:
- Typo p.6 line 3: should be 'did not object TO being contacted.
- P.6 line 17: the authors could consider using only 'obtained' OR 'derived', not both.
- P.6 from line 6: were the response options for professional activity, subject area and economic sectors multiple choice? If so please give brief detail.
- P.14 line 22: typo 'WITH comprising more able individuals'
- P.16 lines 18-24: very long sentence. Please revise.
- P.16 line 10: remove comma after 'the fact'
- P.17 line 13: remove comma after 'It can be assumed'

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 am able to assess the statistics

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

Needs some language corrections before being published

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