Reviewer’s report

Title: Manuscript Do negative childhood conditions increase the risk of somatic symptoms in adolescence? – A prospective cohort study

Version: 1 Date: 27 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Priscilla Martinez

Reviewer's report:

The authors did well to address the reviewers' many comments. I think the paper is much improved. However, there are still some minor but necessary items that I think need to be addressed before publication.

Overall, the manuscript would benefit from some language editing. There are many changes between past and present tense throughout the manuscript, and some words are used incorrectly, such as "entail" in the last sentence of the background in the abstract.

Background
1. Line 36: the Danish cohort that this study is based on has not yet been introduced, so saying "the same Danish cohort" is confusing and doesn't make it quite clear the authors are referring to the cohort used for this analysis.

Methods
1. In the Outcome paragraph, it's still unclear why the authors chose the six items for the age 15 group and the eleven items for the aged 18 group. The statement that "the items were chosen on basis of relevance for the two age-groups" is vague, and it's unclear why some are relevant for one age group and not the other. For example, why are "pains in lower back" relevant for the 15 year olds but not the 18 year olds? I think these are necessary explanations because these are your outcomes measures. Further, some readers might want further explanation of the outcome measures since the Cronbach's alpha for the six items used for the age 15 is 0.69, which is decent but not great.

2. The authors did well to describe in the response to reviewers why they dichotomized the outcomes at the 75th percentile, and I think it would be helpful to include this in the manuscript.

Results
1. The authors present findings for the overall sample and also gender-specific, and it can be hard to follow when we begin with a gender-specific results and then move onto total sample results. I suggest the reviewers state explicitly when results are for the whole sample (for example, the beginning of the paragraph describing Table 2 results).

2. In line 53 on page 11, it seems a little odd that the authors report the exposure with the strongest associations with the outcomes for boys but only the one with a moderate association (somatic symptoms) for girls.
Discussion
1. On line 27 on page 15, the authors state that this study "examine a population-based sample". As I understand it, this is not a sample at all, but rather the entire population that was included in these data. Therefore, the study doesn't need to worry about generalizability because the whole population is already included. Generalizability comes into play when thinking how these findings may apply to other regions of Denmark.

2. I think a line or two in the Discussion about the outcome measures is warranted. While the HSCL is a well-validated measure, and the items chosen for each age group seem to be supported by previous work, the Cronbach's alpha for the 15 year old wasn't great, and there may be some question by readers about how this might impact the findings.

**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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