Reviewer's report

Title: Health-related behaviours and their relationship with self-rated health among Canadian adults

Version: 0 Date: 30 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Nikita Rajani

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper which examines the relationship between self-rated health (SRH) and health-related behaviours among Canadian adults. The study uses pooled data from a Canadian health survey and highlights some interesting findings. I have highlighted a few points below that could strengthen the paper.

Strengths: (1) The study has interesting insights into referents used by individuals in rating their own health. With the use of a large sample size, results are generalisable. (2) The methodology and statistical analyses are clear and appropriate. The operationalisation of all variables is very clear for readers. (3) The authors touch upon some valuable points regarding the importance of adequate sleep on SRH, and its implications for mental health and mental disorders.

Weaknesses: (1) I would want to see more evidence about the use of a single-item measure of SRH, especially compared to multi-component measures. Similarly, a more detailed explanation for why high-risk alcohol use was operationalised in the way it was would be helpful. In the current operationalisation, individuals who drink everyday (regardless of quantity) are categorised as high-risk alcohol users which may be skewing the results. Another study amongst Canadian adults and also looking at SRH and alcohol use found similar findings but used a different operationalisation for alcohol use. The authors could consider strengthening the validity of their findings by comparing to other studies which use different operationalisations (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4710937/#!po=39.4737) but found similar results. (2) The authors may want to consider adding a bit of information/evidence from other research into why the relationship between SRH and high-risk alcohol use amongst men did not exist as this could add more value to the discussion section. Currently, explanations are plausible but it would be good to provide evidence for this, as well as compare whether the gender difference existed in prior studies. (3) In the introduction, while it is mentioned that researchers have found varied findings, this has not been expanded on. It would be useful to know what previous studies have found and what this study adds to the existing literature. At the moment, it is not clear what is new that is being added by the study. The authors may also consider reiterating this in a sentence or two in the conclusion.
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

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