Reviewer’s report

Title: Health and educational aspirations in adolescence: A longitudinal study in Finland

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Reviewer: Dorothea Kesztyüs

Reviewer's report:

In this manuscript the authors report a survey of adolescents between their 7th and 9th grade on self-reported health factors in correlation with the students choice to be made between academic and vocational tracks.

Comments and recommendations on the content of the manuscript

- Overall: This is a comprehensive and well-written manuscript on an interesting topic. It adds new information to what is already known about health and education, especially in a very sensitive phase, the adolescence. The statistical methods used, and in particular the rather scarcely to be found attrition analyses, are very appropriate. However, there are a few aspects or questions that I would like to address.

- Abstract Methods, line 24:158: Please resolve the acronym SDQ to improve comprehensibility.

- Methods 2.5. Analytical strategy & all respective tables: please add any information about the model fit e.g. pseudo r2 or -2LL for the different regression models. You can follow the example of Dey & Raheem if you wish (1).

- Results 3.1 Health in the 7th grade, line 19-23: The CI includes 1.00, possibly due to rounding errors? At least significance is marginal.

- Results 3.1 Health in the 9th grade, line 55-59: "was associated with being less undecided" would be clearer. I don’t really see a conflict here, I would consider it as a natural development process in decision making.

- Discussion page 2, line 16-29: Only "medicine prescribed" was related to lower (not higher) aspirations when assessed in the 7th grade. While in the 9th grade a rather balanced ratio
between lower and higher educational aspirations becomes clear. There are lower odds for both tracks in grade 9 but almost equal odds for vocational and academic tracks. I recommend revising this section and possibly to adapt the abstract in this sense.

Table 2, full model, vocational track, SDQ slightly raised: this CI also contains zero, so strictly speaking it is not significant.

References

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:

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