Reviewer's report

Title: Is caregiving by Baby Boomer women related to the presence of depressive symptoms? Evidence from eight national surveys

Version: 1 Date: 09 Aug 2018

Reviewer: Christian Hakulinen

Reviewer's report:

This interesting study on an important topic. Results are clear and analyzes well conducted. I have few recommendations.

1) Due to cross-sectional design, I think that it would be better to state that women who are caregiving have more depressive symptoms than to say that caregiving is associated with depressive symptoms. Although it is likely that caregiving increases depressive symptoms, this has not been examined in the current study, and selection processes (e.g., individuals who become caregivers have more depressive symptoms in the first place) could also explain current findings. This could be also mentioned in the limitations.

2) What was the rational for selecting these specific studies in the current study? Did authors, for example, look for all the possible studies with open-access data?

3) It is a bit unclear why country-level variables were inserted separately to the statistical models. To me, it seems that these variables explain very little, if any, of the variability in the individual level, thus better option would be to include them at one single model.

4) Instead of using CES-D cut-off points to divide participants to depressed vs. not-depressed, did the authors consider standardizing depression scores (e.g., mean=0, sd=1) and then conducting analyses with the continuous measures?

5) From table 1, at least following important descriptive statistics are missing: mean age (and sd), prevalence of caregiving status

6) In addition to reporting prevalence of depressive symptoms in each study, symptoms scores (and standard deviations) should be reported for all individual studies and separately for those who were caregiving and for those who were not.
7) The title of study is a bit misleading; by stating that there is "Evidence from nineteen countries" at least I assumed that that this 19 countries come from a single study. Thus, for example, "evidence from 8 survey studies" would work better.

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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