Reviewer’s report

Title: School functioning and internalizing problems in young schoolchildren

Version: 1 Date: 25 Nov 2019

Reviewer: Reviewer 2

Reviewer's report:

PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:

OBJECTIVE - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses one or several testable research questions? (Brief or other article types: is there a clear objective?)

Yes - there is a clear objective

DESIGN - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?

Yes - the approach is appropriate

EXECUTION - Are the experiments and analyses performed with sufficient technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?

Yes - experiments and analyses were performed appropriately

STATISTICS - Is the use of statistics in the manuscript appropriate?

Yes - appropriate statistical analyses have been used in the study

INTERPRETATION - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?

Yes - the author's interpretation is reasonable
OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Has the author addressed your concerns sufficiently for you to now recommend the work as a technically sound contribution? If not, can further revisions be made to make the work technically sound?

Yes - current version is technically sound

PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: The reviewers thoroughly analyzed the article and made many valuable comments and suggestions. On some issues, the views of both reviewers overlapped, such as the wording of the purpose of the study and the definitions of terms. This indicates that the manuscript needed correction. The new version of the article's manuscript and the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments indicate that the authors have made very careful adjustments to the article.

It is commendable that the text has been professionally edited in English and in scientific terminology.

I think the authors have unnecessarily changed the term 'problems' to 'symptoms' everywhere. This should be especially taken into account when teachers evaluate students: the scale used was more likely to detect only internalizing problems than symptoms. I think the authors did right by leaving the term 'internalizing problems' in the tables.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS/SUGGESTIONS:

The text in page 8 lines 46-58 (corrected text) may be corrected as follows: "We first explored... Then the following research..."

The paragraph in page 9 lines 19-39 may be removed or at least indicate citation for "previous research".

Tables 4, 6, 7: insert 'main' for covariates.

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

Declaration of competing interests  
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

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If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

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