Reviewer’s report

Title: Parenthood, information and support on the internet. A literature review of research on parents and professionals online

Version: 1 Date: 22 September 2008

Reviewer: Gauthier Bouche

Reviewer’s report:

The main problem of this article (which is by the way about an interesting topic) is its structure which is a reflection of the methods of the study. Therefore, my main comment concerns the structure of the article. For now, I am not able to see clearly what this study adds. I can not decide whether this article is worth publishing until substantial changes have been made by the authors. Then, I would be pleased to re-review this article.

Major compulsory revisions

Structure of the article

I think the article has to be reorganised before publication. This a literature review and the current version is suffering from a lack of organisation.

Page 4, end of the introduction
At the end of the introduction, we expect to find a clear objective of the study, like “In this paper, we presented a literature review to …”. The questions help to understand but they do not summarize what you wanted to assess. If these questions are your “research questions” please be more explicit.

Pages 4 to 7, methods section
When a literature review is made the search strategy has to be clear. The “methods” paragraph seems to say the opposite. I advise the authors to reshape the methods paragraph with sub-sections. Here is an example:

1- Research Questions
2- Search strategy
3- Inclusion criteria
4- Assessment of studies for inclusion

If the authors are able to do so, then the other sections will be easier to reorganise. The background should justify the research questions, and the results should include “result of the search strategy” and answers to the research questions, point by point.

Page 6, 3rd paragraph:
Results of the search strategy should come first in the results section. Therefore the paragraph page 6 beginning with “The database searches yielded…” should be part of the results.

The following paragraph (page 6 beginning with “However, despite this systematic…”) is part of the search strategy and should be more concise.

Page 7, “Parents go online – Needs and motives”

To me, the first paragraph is more a justification of the research question than a result, all the more that the references of this paragraph do not come from your search strategy. This problem occurs at the beginning of each subsection of the results. These first paragraphs should be in the background sections since they justify the research questions.

Page 12, From “This is evidenced by the steadily…” to “Madge & O’Connor”.

Again, I think that theses sentences are not at the right place. I am not sure that they answer to the question of “parent’s online behaviour”.

Research questions:

I think that one of the research questions should be: “What are the consequences of parental use of the Internet for their child, in terms of behaviour (health service utilisation, health attitudes) and benefits (if any) for parents?”

Today, this question seems really important since only few studies have given elements to answer this question. For example, results given by Hudson et al. and mentioned in your article are of particular interest.

Minor Essential Revision

Page 3, 2nd paragraph:

I do not really understand what was the purpose of your earlier article which “presented a first mapping out of the research field parenthood and internet”. Since you didn’t indicate the reference I can not find more information by myself. Could you please (a) make the differences between this first work and the current one clearer (b) give us the reference since this is not an anonymous review?

Page 14.

A comment is made about an Israeli study, but the reference is missing.

Page 24, 2nd paragraph.

“Similarly, O’Connor & Madge” and not “Similarly, O’Connel & Madge”.

Table and Figure

There are no table or figure in your article. For readers, it is often easier to read an article with figures or tables which present the results concisely. I know that this is not always easy and necessary in a literature review, but I would consider adding a figure or a table (for example, a “flow chart” to present results of the search strategy).
Other comments

Please, avoid terms like “rarely” (page 5, 4 lines before the end), “the vast majority” (page 6, beginning of the 3rd paragraph), “majority” (3 lines under), without any information on effective and corresponding percentage.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests