Reviewer's report

Title: Low and high attendance at general practice reveals family influence

Version: 1 Date: 4 September 2006

Reviewer: Heidi-Ingrid Maaroos

Reviewer's report:

General
The article is written on the important topic and study has rich database for analysis.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached): The article is difficult to read and needs additional materials and publications to understand studied population, content of the problem and authors ideas. All article needs more exactness in terminology, methods, results discussion and conclusions.
Title: I suggest to change word "attandance" with "consultation rate"
Abstract: redesign after changes in the article, the abstract is too superficial
Background: needs corrections. Roads 19-24 have no references, all first paragraph needs more concentration of terms( individual determinants, socialisation, shared circumstances). The study question in the last two paragraphs off page 3 needs clearer formulation.
Methods: all parts of methods need clarification(data, definition of families, independent variables, analysis), all are either too too superficial (data), or title is unappropriate(family definition on page 4 where is only the first paragraph is definition, next paragraph is description how families were devided into groups), or part consists of too much literature references and difficult to find in the text vairables what were important in this study (page 5 part titeled independent vairables). Description of studied population and methods (how many consultations, how many one page questionnaires and for what, how many health interviews ,what statistical methods for what were used) better to show in table.
Page 4, 2.paragraph 7.road " contact frequencies than expected"- how the expected frequencies were calculated- it needs description in methods
Discussion: the first paragraph ends with sentence (roads 9-11)what not belongs to discussion part. All discussion has too few references and comparison of own results with other studies. References to Tables 2 and 4 on page 8 belongs to the part results. All discussion part should be more synthesis of study results.
Conclusions: should be based more on the results of study and stress importance of findings.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)Fig.1 is not very appropriate as it adds very few information
Table 1: headings for columns for the second part of the table are missing
References include thesis (18, 19)- better to change with published papers.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore) None

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests