Reviewer's report

**Title:** Discriminative ability of the generic- and condition specific Child OIDP-results from the Limpopo - Arusha school health project (LASH): A cross-sectional study

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 24 February 2011

**Reviewer:** Maria Beatriz Gaviño

**Reviewer's report:**

This manuscript aimed to compare the discriminative ability of the generic Child OIDP with respect dental caries and periodontal problems across the socio-culturally different study sites of Arusha and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Secondly, the discriminative ability of the generic- and the CS Child OIDP attributed to dental caries, periodontal problems and malocclusion was compared with respect to various oral conditions among schoolchildren in Dar es Salaam as part of construct validation.

My concerns are: Major Compulsory Revisions

The title must be adequate in relation to the aim of the study.

The abstract needs to be rewritten. The item “Results” is hard to read. Some prepositions along the text are missed. Please, describe the abbreviations when citing the first time (Child OIDP and ORs). The authors should change the sign “>” to “=” if referring to “groups without caries” (DMFT=0) or add this information (DMFT>0) after “groups with caries”.

Background

In the first paragraph the sentence “However, results from studies investigating the relationship between subjective- and clinical oral health indicators have been equivocal” must be explained. Which and why have they been equivocal? I think the authors cannot generalize the respective statement.

Methods

Socio-demographic factors are very important in study like this, but it could be considered why the religious affiliation could be important.

In methods, only Dar es Salaam sample was evaluated for malocclusion and participated in discriminative test of the Generic- and CS specific Child OIDP. Please, explain why and make it clear in the methodology. It is mandatory to specify the number of individuals who participated of reproducibility test.

The fact that in Arusha site the questionnaire was self-administered and in Dar es Salaam site was applied by interview generates doubt about the results. This is commented in the Discussion, but the authors stated that biases were minimized by information about the data confidentiality. Nevertheless, the two
different applications are questionable.

Results
The description of the results is a little confuse, and hard to read. Some data easily viewed in tables are not necessary to be described in details along the text. The tables must be self-explanatory. The most important findings should be described in the respective item.

The specification of statistical tests in the legends of tables must be provided, as shown in Table 5.

Discussion
The following consideration in the discussion “Structured, self-and interviewer administered questionnaires as applied in this study have certain limitations with bias due to social desirability, acquiescence and lack of recall being frequently encountered, particularly in younger age groups” confirmed the doubt about the consistence of the findings. Despite the references presented, the biases might be interfered in the interpretation of the results.

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

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

**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.