Reviewer's report

Title: Caries risk assessment in schoolchildren using a reduced Cariogram model

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Reviewer: Maria Beatriz Gavião

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This is an interesting study, with the aim to investigate the caries predictive ability of a reduced Cariogram model without salivary tests in schoolchildren. Considering that microbial tests are costly and time consuming, the question posed by the authors was well defined. The methods are well described and the data are sound. The discussion was very well addressed. The limitations of the work were clearly stated.

Minor Essential Revisions: The title could include the variables that were eliminated from the model.

Discretionary Revision: Considering the results of previous similar studies in relation to mutans streptococci enumeration, the results about the elimination of this variable in the Cariogram should be expected.

Major Compulsory Revisions: Conclusion - The conclusion is not in line with the aim and the results, since the null hypothesis was rejected and the mutans streptococci counts had the greatest impact on the predictive ability. So, the conclusion should be improved, to support the findings in a better way. In fact, is the statement “caries risk assessment with a reduced Cariogram model without salivary tests can still be used for caries prediction in schoolchildren” truly, despite the consideration about accuracy?

The same consideration is addressed for the Conclusion in the Abstract.

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.