Reviewer’s report

Title: Relative analgesia and licensed dentists: practices and opinions interplay from a national survey

Version: 1 Date: 30 March 2012

Reviewer: Mark Donaldson

Reviewer’s report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1) Many of the percentages reported are incorrect. In some cases just to one decimal point, while in others the results are markedly incorrect. This may be the result of a bigger methodology flaw which is the denominator that is being used. The Results section beginning on Page 7 states that there were 127 usable respondents. Table 2 however, contradicts this by stating that only 126 surveys were usable. Regardless, all of these numbers need to be reviewed and more clearly shown how they were derived. There are too many discrepancies which decrease the overall readability.

2) There is a significant problem with formatting – not just the lack of spacing between paragraphs, but also the incorrect punctuation in every reference. As stated below too, this manuscript would greatly benefit from a general review by a native English speaker prior to being considered for publication in an English language Journal.

3) I would pay particular attention to your references and the exactness of your citations. Just one example is Reference #4 which is cited on page 3 (Freeman R, Carson P: Relative analgesia and general dental practitioners: attitudes and intentions to provide conscious sedation for paediatric dental extractions. Int J Paediatr Dent 2003, 13:320-326). This citations makes claims about, “General dental practitioners in the United States . . .,” however, this data is from dentists in Northern Ireland! There are many other examples of problems with the Reference section (see the title of Reference #8 or the misspelling of “Kuwait” in Reference #20 and on page 10 where it is cited). These are just a few examples of the many problems that need to be addressed.

4) The term “Relative Analgesia” is not routinely used and is certainly not widely-understood to mean nitrous oxide – oxygen sedation.

Minor Essential Revisions

1) The title should indicate the country of origin as in, “Relative analgesia and licensed dentists: practices and opinions interplay from a national survey in Brazil.”

2) The Methods section in the Abstract should more correctly state 126 (or 127) dentists since data is not being drawn from 281 dentists. This brings up a bigger issue which should be addressed in the Discussion section of this paper. Brazil
has an estimated population of 189,841,456 and is the fifth largest country in the world. Brazil has 191 institutions granting degrees in dentistry (137 private and fifty-four public), 17,157 available student positions, and graduates 10,000 professionals annually. The WHO estimates that there are 160,781 practicing dentists in that country. While the Discussion section of this manuscript does admit to many shortcomings, it stops short of emphasizing that any conclusions whether statistically significant or not are probably not generalizable based on the 126 (or 127) total respondents to this survey (less than 0.08% of the population being represented (127/160,781).

3) How are “wealthy” and “less wealthy” geographic regions defined?

4) How were the cutpoints of 15-28 for “less favorable” and 29-41 for “more favorable” determined?

5) What does, “Dentists who practiced RA in their routine . . .” mean? Hours per day or hours per week of using nitrous? How was this determined in the survey?

6) Specifics such as, “cultural aspects” are not defined, “costs” are not defined (cost of a course, cost of equipment; even just relative numbers would make these concepts less abstract).

7) The Conclusion needs to be reconsidered. Considering that there were only 126 (or 127 respondents out of a possible 281, does support the first sentence, “This study points out that RA is not widespread in Brazilian dental offices.”

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.