Reviewer's report

Title: The traditional practice of canine bud removal in the offspring of Ethiopian immigrants.

Version: 1 Date: 6 May 2013

Reviewer: Ratilal Laloo

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Major compulsory revisions:

1. No overview on the prevalence of canine toothbud removal is presented in the background, to re-visit in the discussion when comparing study findings to published works.

2. It would be useful to include an overview of the general and oral health consequences of this practice in the background section.

3. This would build the argument for the study, as this is currently not well presented.

4. In the methods, define 'low socioeconomic class'.

5. The 794 children who underwent the dental examination, what percentage is this of all the children in the 21 nursery schools? Response rate?

6. This analysis appears to be a sub-analysis of a larger study, any findings worth reporting from the larger study and any references to inform the readers of the method details.

7. The results are currently very descriptive ... any data on the distribution of canines missing per child, for e.g. do most children with missing canines have just one missing or all four ... which canines are missing, as stated in the discussion usually lower canines buds are removed, was this the case in this study?

8. The findings of enamel defects is confusing, and separating defects to canines and adjacent teeth would be useful, and for the latter findings only related to adjacent teeth with missing canines. Which adjacent teeth were particularly affected?

9. No gender differences are reported, and there are suggestions that gender differences may exist, for e.g. Bataringaya et al, 2005.

10. In the discussion the first two paragraphs make many statements with no references.

11. Not discussion on the actual eruption times of canines, the issue is referred
but needs to explored further. In the younger age group, in both groups, how
many of the missing canines may be unerupted? What percentage of the missing
canines may be due to dental caries? It is assumed that all the missing canines
are due to the cultural practice of toothbud removal. While this will not change
the significant differences between the two cultural groups, it is important to
consider.

12. Are there any reports / data on the consequences of this practice in Israel?
Any deaths?

13. Currently a significant part (almost entire page 2) of the discussion provides
background information on enamel defects including hypoplasia and opacities ..
this could be reduced to allow opportunity to discuss the issues of canine tooth
bud removal. for e.g, the issue of parental education is mentioned at the end but
this is major issue related to the cultural practices, and how to change very
embedded practices. It would be useful for the researchers to suggest how best
to change this practice. For e.g. the paper by Jamieson LM, 2005 attempts to
inform this. Cultural practices, and they apply to all societies in the world, are
complex issues and extremely difficult to change, even if logic shows clearly that
the practice is detrimental. Our role as researchers is to inform this change. Any
suggestions from the researchers?

14. The term 'racial heritage' needs to be explained, used in the discussion.

15. Table 1 adds little value that is not already in the text … perhaps present by
gender.

16. Table 3, the enamel defects … separate for canines and adjacent teeth …
the missing canine data is repeated, already presented in Table 2.

**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:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

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