Reviewer's report

Title: Dental Caries Status of Dai Preschool Children in Yunnan, China

Version: 3 Date: 3 October 2013

Reviewer: Allan Pau

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Minor essential revisions

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
The authors sought to assess the caries and severe caries status and investigate the risk factors for caries in five-year-old Dai children in Yunnan, China.

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
The methods are appropriate and well described. A questionnaire survey and oral examination was carried out. Subjects were identified using a multi-stage, stratified sampling method. Where reference was made to “where many Dai people”, the authors should clarify. The authors should provide some information on i. whether all children in Yunnan attend kindergartens, ii. are there those who do not attend because they can’t pay, iii. are there those who attend private ones?

3. Are the data sound?
The data would appear to be sound

4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
Yes

5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
The first paragraph of the Discussion should probably be in the Methods.
The authors proposed that the high caries experience of “children living in villages” was due to “unsatisfactory oral hygiene practices, frequent snacking, and lack of easy access to dental care’, all of which are well recognised risk factors for caries. Have the authors considered whether there are factors peculiar to this community that might affect their caries experience? Such as access to clean water for brushing, access to toothbrushes and fluoride toothpastes?
The authors reported that “the caries experience of the Dai children was lower than that of the children in rural Cambodia”, and suggested that this difference may be related to “social culture and geographical differences’. It would be interesting to know what these are and how they actually explain the difference.

Again, the authors suggested that “gender discrimination against female children still exists in some Dai ethnic minority families, and this may contribute to this difference in the caries experience” but do not explain how this discrimination can
result in the difference.

6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   Yes

7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   Yes

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
   Yes

9. Is the writing acceptable?
   Yes

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

**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