Reviewer’s report

Title: Characteristics associated with the use of public dental services by the adult population of the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil

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Reviewer: Karen Peres

Reviewer’s report:

The aim of this study was to investigate the factors associated with the use of public dental services by the adult population of the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, using data from the SB Minas Gerais Project – research on the oral health conditions of the population of Minas Gerais, based on Andersen and Davidson’s (1997) theoretical model. Despite this is an important subject, this paper provide only local and modest information about oral health care. My comments about this paper are as follow:

The title does not represent the paper. The authors have investigated the associated factors related with public health services use compared with private health care. People who did not attend health care were not included in the analysis. Although the authors have a well defined research question, they failed to clearly articulate the real gaps in the literature.

Details of the sampling scheme must be presented. For example, it is not clear what was the target population (adults?)?. What were the expected frequencies of the factors under study? What was the admitted error? What was the proposed sample size? What was the response rate?

The authors proposed the use of hierarchical approach according to Victora et al. However, the modeling presented in Tables 3 and 4 do not appear to me that this approach was used, since the variables of previous levels were adjusted for variables of the subsequent levels. Moreover, it is not possible to observe whether there was adjustment for confounders since the authors have included only statistically significant variables (p<0.05).

I suggest to the authors review some aspects and submit the manuscript to a more local journal. Another option would be to review the paper and put it in a broader perspective.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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' below.