Reviewer's report

Title: Preventive oral health practices of school pupils in Southern Nigeria

Version: 1 Date: 5 September 2013

Reviewer: Joyce Rose Masalu

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Preventive oral health practices of school pupils in Southern Nigeria by Moranike O. Folayan

1. Abstract
Could be expanded to include statistical tests used,

2. Introduction page 3: Paragraph 3: Last but one sentence –Is toothpaste inexpensive to groups with low income? The reference quoted (No 16) has referred Scandinavians who by and large have most of their basic needs met. Could authors be more specific on this statement? Paragraph 4: Can the authors provide any recent references on the current evidence on the impact of dietary measures in caries control in communities which are well covered by fluorides? The last statement of paragraph 4 needs more supporting arguments and can also be linked to common risk factor approach to health.

Page 4: Para 2: the last but one statement: These same children…… needs a reference. Paragraph 3: the study will determine rather than evaluate prevalence

3. Materials and methods
Page 6; Paragraph 2: sample size is estimated by using the prevalence of the outcome variable of the study i.e. the prescribed preventive practices and not dental caries. This is a methodological flaw. The sample size may be unjustifiably big and may lead to error type I which falsely displays associations which are due to too large a sample.

4. Results
Some multivariate analysis was done for variables that did not show statistically significant associations at bivariate level. The authors further describe predictors of outcome variables without paying attention to confidence intervals that actually indicate that some of these associations are not statistically significant. E.g. page 9 paragraph 4….18% increase, the CI is 1.0-1.39

5. Discussion
Insert references in paragraph 1 of discussion

Limitations of this study have to be discussed, the age and gender influence of performing the preventive behavior do not seem to be featured in the discussion. The implication of these predictors in mounting interventions does not seem to be factored in at any level in the discussion. Otherwise why did you want to know the gender and age differences in performing the practices?
**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.