Reviewer’s report

Title: Establishing oral health promoting behaviours in children - parents' views on barriers, facilitators and professional support: a qualitative study

Version: 3 Date: 10 October 2015

Reviewer: Ahmad Aljafari

Reviewer’s report:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to review this interesting and relevant piece of work. The findings and conclusions of the present study add to the current knowledge regarding oral health behaviours in children, and possible approaches to support families in caries prevention. This is an issue that continues to be of significant interest to oral health professionals around the world.

The manuscript is well written, but would benefit from a few revisions prior to publication.

Major compulsory revisions

1. Background: page 5, paragraph 2, line 108: Some studies did indeed look at parental views on preventive interventions, but as you rightly noted in the opening of the paragraph, they were in other populations. As such, I would remove this sentence as it makes a general claim, or alter it so that it is specific to the population in the Netherlands.

2. As an international reader, I'd like to know more regarding the child dental care system in the Netherlands. Insurance companies were discussed in the findings, but the exact role those companies have in child dental care in the Netherlands was not clear to me. Furthermore, is dental care for all children free? Do all children need to register with a dentist? Are there specific toothbrushing and diet guidelines followed by dental health professionals in the Netherlands? These points should be explained in a few sentences either in the background or the methods, as the authors find fitting, to provide context for the related findings.

3. Methods: Page 7, line 161: I suggest that the response rate is moved to the opening of the results, as this is more appropriate than including it in the methods. Were any of the groups more difficult to recruit than the others?
4. Methods: Page 7, lines 166-172: Same as point three. The characteristics of the focus groups and the participants should be included in the results and not in the methods.

5. Methods: Page 9, line 205: Thematic analysis should be referenced to provide interested readers with a resource they can read to learn more about the process.

6. Methods: I presume the quotes were originally given in Dutch. I suggest that the approach to translation should be noted.

7. Results: All quotes need to be annotated. This can be done at the start of the quote: e.g. A Moroccan mother noted, a Dutch father from the high SES group said, or, at the end of the quote: e.g. Participant number, Turkish mother

8. Discussion: Page 22, line 521: I would not call the sample small, as this was a qualitative study where, as the authors explained, thematic saturation was reached. Furthermore, I suggest they introduce the reader to the exact term ‘thematic saturation’ here and reference it.

Minor essential reviews
1. Page 14, line 337: ‘who did not concern’. More appropriate to say ‘who were not concerned’.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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