Reviewer’s report
Title: Experience of maintaining tooth brushing for children born with a cleft lip and/or palate

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Reviewer: Anna-Lena Ostberg

Reviewer's report:
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"The role of intentions in establishing good tooth brushing behaviour for children with clefts"
Original title: Enacting motivation in everyday oral health care: A qualitative study about children born with a CL/P and their parents

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Comments to revision October 2016
2016-11-10

GENERAL COMMENT
This manuscript has undergone substantial improvements since the original submission and many of my questions and comments have been met. However, a considerable number of my former points remains.

A key point is still (despite some attempts made by the authors to clarify): what in the findings is specific for children with cleft lip/palate? And this could be said the other way around: what is in common with children without cleft lip/palate? The same obstacles? Similar circumstances irrespective of the state CL/P? This is interesting and should be discussed. The authors' answer under point 5 could partly be included in the ms.
SPECIFIC COMMENTS
Title and abstract
In the title, the term "intention" is now the focus. This is only part of and not mirroring the whole contents of the current paper. As I understand it, the paper mostly explores experiences of tooth-brushing. Also, I looked up the term "cleft". This is not specific for cleft lip a/o palate according to a search in PubMed.

The abstract is still wordy and can/must be cut down considerably. Please consider my suggestion below. Please note the need to be specific and that the conclusion shall be based on actual findings in the actual study.

"Background and aim
Children with a Cleft Lip and/or Palate (CL/P) have been reported to have poorer oral health than those without the condition. The consequences for these children can be particularly problematic due to implications for future treatments. The aim of the study was to explore experiences of tooth brushing among children in the United Kingdom (UK) with a CL/P and their parents, and which obstacles that interfere with possibilities to carry out good tooth brushing behaviour.

Methods
Semi-structured interviews were carried out with twenty-two parents and sixteen 5-11-year-old children with a CL/P, recruited at a cleft centre in the UK. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

Results
Three key categories in the findings were drawn from the qualitative data: first, parents of children with a CL/P generally had strong intentions to look after their children's teeth but children's intentions are inconsistent. Second, parents were primary enablers of children's tooth brushing behaviour, often employing approaches adapting to their child's characteristics to encourage good tooth brushing behaviours. Third, obstacles encountered when they endeavoured to carry out tooth brushing behaviours were awkwardly growing teeth, illnesses and forgetfulness.
Conclusions

The findings suggest that parents of children with a CL/P need support to encourage and prioritize tooth brushing within the context of demanding and dynamic family lives.

Introduction

References are still lacking to some extent: p4, line 11 and p5, line 14.

I do not understand the expression in p4, line 6: "informing the design of". Please explain.

P4, §2, first sentence: is this restricted to infants?

The authors argue that the perspective shall be narrowed to the UK. Again, to be interesting to an international readership, please mention something what differs in the dental care for children with CL/P from other comparable Western countries.

Aim: please see abstract.

Methods

This section has been developed well. The rather simple analysis method is satisfactory described and the choice of informants is much clearer. However, please note that the age range is mentioned twice. Also, the inclusion criteria "type of cleft" is dim.

The appendix with the topic/interview guide is acknowledged. It seems that quite a few of the questions were rather steering, but hopefully they were not posed one after one - should be clarified in the text. Also, the background and possible preconceptions of the researchers performing the analysis must be better described (profession etc.).

Specifically:

P5, line 23: what do you mean by "drew upon"?

P8, line 4: do I understand correctly - were the interviews only 10-15 minutes long?
Results
The organization of the findings is improved and Figure 2 is a great help for the reader. However, I am surprised that the authors have not identified the concerns for tooth decay, social acceptability and future dental treatment as key issues/subcategories. The subcategories under the first category are simple sorting by parent and child. Please consider.

Specific
p11, line 19: who is Mother Hubbard?!?!
Are children with CL/P more often infected and on medication?

Discussion
My earlier comment remains exactly the same: "The discussion section is short and rather superficial. A large part of it (§2) is dedicated to a discussion about "implementation intentions", which seems to be of great interest to the authors however not investigated in the current study. Is this the next study?" My assumption was right and this is now stated in page 16. However, the long reasoning here should be better placed in that future paper.

The same goes for this former comment (see also General comment): "When having read through the manuscript, my reflection is: what in the findings is specific for children with cleft lip/palate? In some passages their state is mentioned but much could concern children without cleft lip/palate as well. I would like the authors to reflect on this. I understand that the authors did not aim for a deeper understanding of the problem, however this would have been more interesting." This could be a major point in the discussion but the authors have ignored this.

Conclusion: this must be grounded on the findings in the current study. That is, the last sentence does not fit in here. And, as written above, the conclusion shall coincide with that in the abstract.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.
Yes
Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.
Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.
No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
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