Reviewer's report

Title: Dental caries status and its associated factors among 5-year-old Hong Kong children: A cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: Jose Leopoldo Ferreira Antunes

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This study assessed the prevalence of dental caries in 5-year-old children living in Hong Kong, and explored its association with some well-known factors of the disease. This theme is certainly relevant to dental public health, mainly for the planning of dental services. However, as a scientific communication, the manuscript is solely confirmatory of what has been extensively known: dental caries is largely prevalent in the deciduous dentition, most of the disease has not been treated, its prevalence associates with snacking frequency and socioeconomic background.

If "more of the same" can be considered enough to justify a new communication, I would point out some questions that affect this manuscript.

1. Some was said on the sample size calculation, though nothing was explained on how participants were selected in Methods. This subject is briefly (and insufficiently) addressed in the first paragraph of the Discussion, as a limitation of the study. If the sample was obtained by stratification, this method should have been reported, and the statistical analysis should have considered sample weights and the survey design.

2. The discussion would benefit of a restructuring. I suggest that it should begin with the statement of the main findings of the study. What does this study add to what was already known on this subject? How these findings relate to the literature and the study limitations should be subsequently discussed.

3. The STROBE is not a method for conducting research; it is solely a checklist to guide authors in the preparation of their report. Reporting that the study followed the STROBE statement (2nd sentence of Methods) is a mistake and is poor guidance for future research.
4. The association between caries prevalence and dental visits was poorly explained in the text. It is predictable that children affected by caries were more prone to have had a dental visit; they might have had pain or treatment need. The association of this covariate with the prevalence of caries could have been further assessed if authors have investigated the reason for the dental visit (treatment or prevention).

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.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

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