Reviewer’s report

Title: Dental Caries Status of Lisu Preschool Children in Yunnan Province, China: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Reviewer: Maria Grazia Cagetti

Reviewer’s report:

The paper entitled "Dental Caries Status of Lisu Preschool Children in Yunnan Province, China: A Cross-Sectional Study" is an interesting, well written and methodologically sound study. English is acceptable even if a few sentences require attention.

The only section that I suggest to modify is the discussion. In fact, I think that the discussion would improve if focused on the results of the paper.

1) Decayed deciduous teeth are not treated. It would be useful to know which dental facilities are present on the territory and if they are to be paid by the individual or provided free of charge. In the questionnaire the authors refer to Dental service but no specification is provided in the text. Moreover, these caries figures (untreated deciduous teeth) are not only found in least developed countries. In fact, even the data reported by the National Pathfinder Survey (Caries Res 2009; 43: 155-162) on Italian 4-year-old children show that few deciduous teeth are treated in high-income countries also. It would be interesting to briefly examine this comparison.

2) Use of fluoride. The data show that only 20% of the sample uses a fluoride toothpaste and this could be the main reason of the high prevalence of caries recorded in the examined population. It would be interesting to know if the use of fluoride toothpaste is not widespread because it is expensive or because it is not easy to find, as well as reported, because the population does not know its benefits.

3) The socio-economic aspect. It would have been interesting to evaluate if there is an association between caries and children not living with their parents. In fact, children taken in care by others than parent might not receive adequate attention in terms of hygiene, even if their income is relatively high.

Some minor revisions

Background

line 83. 1196 RBM / per year is it correct? China's latest poverty line of 2,300 yuan ($ 360) per year is reported. Did the authors refer to a monthly income? In fact, the authors reported (in table 2) as the lowest income group <500 RMB (?) monthly.
line 96. reference 5 is a review and not an epidemiological survey, as it seems when reading the text.

Methods

line 104 Again, reference 5 is incorrectly used.

Results

line 179-180 "The distribution of the dmft score was positively skewed, with a skewness of 0.599 (Fig. 1)" It is not clear how the authors obtained the reported skewness value, since it is not reported in fig.1

Discussion

line 234. Please provide a reference to justify the sentence "Nevertheless, the prevalence of dental caries among the children from the Dai and Bulang preschool children in Yunnan".

References

Some references are not reported in the style required by the journal.

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 recommend additional statistical review

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