Author’s response to reviews

Title: The impact of dental treatment and age on salivary cortisol and alpha-amylase levels of patients with varying degrees of dental anxiety

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(Reviewer 1): The authors have attempted to study an important parameter and biochemical indicator in Saliva.
The word "rate" has been missed while describing Heart rate. Kindly correct.
Change has been made on Page 8 Paragraph 2 and all other use of the term have been checked.
I also feel that the numbers fo subjects recruited and followed up are not matching at one place between text and flow chart. Please check.
We apologize for the error. The paragraph has been rephrased in keeping with the results in the table.

(Reviewer 2): This is an interesting study and can be an important addition to the literature. However, there are few concerns that need to be addressed.
1) First, it is important to note that dental phobia and anxiety are two different situations. Based on the title and introduction it is difficult to make out what exactly is measured in the study. So, it is advised to explicitly state these things.
2) The sentence "The Children's Fear Survey Schedule- children's subscale (CFSS-DS) is a subjective measure of dental fear that has been validated in Arabic and has been found to be useful in the measurement of fear in children. The tool has been previously used to differentiate between fearful and phobic dental patients" should be added along with methodology section. Please consider moving the sentence and rephrasing it.
The sentence has been moved to the methodology section and rephrased.
3) To communicate findings to readers in a more meaningful way, it is highly recommended to explain the measures used 'such as Frankl behavioural rating scale' (Include score range and how it is rated), rather than just stating their scores. This include all behavioural ratings, psychometric measurements and physiological measurements used in the study. An explanation of the Frankl rating scale has been added. References have been added for all psychometric measurements used in the study and details added about the collection of data.

4) Please include statements on the reliability and validity of questionnaires used. In addition, explain the behavioural management techniques employed. The questionnaire used was previously validated and a reference been added to that effect. A statement to that effect has been added to the methodology. Please note that since this study was a large collection of patients the non-pharmacological behavior management techniques varied from participant to participant. This has been addressed in the discussion.

5) Correct the sentence "average heart rate" - The mean average heart between different groups was 97.3 (SD=13.77) with the highest heart rates observed with Anxious patients. Correction has been made.

6) It could be inferred from flow-chart / conclusion that matching was done before allocation to control/ study group. Please mention this in methodology also. The information has been added to the paragraph under methodology.

7) Authors have tried to incorporate many relevant points in discussion, however, few caveats should be taken into account. First, behavioural assessment during dental t/t might exclude children who did not visit clinic because of phobia. Second, it is highly likely for phobic kids to behave negatively during behavioural management sessions and rate much higher on scales than non-phobic kids. We take the reviewers points into account and have added these points under limitations of the study.