Dental caries experience of pre-school children in Mangalore, India

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Abstract

Background: The present study was done to assess the dental caries experience of pre-school children aged 3-5 years in Mangalore city.

Materials and methods: Clinical assessment of dental caries was done by Dentition status and treatment need (WHO Oral Health Assessment Form, 1997) using dentition status part only and decayed, missing and filled teeth were calculated from the information.

Results: The prevalence of dental caries among anganwadi children was 81.4%. Among the kindergarten children the prevalence of dental caries was 62.3%. The mean dmft among the anganwadi children was 4.62 (3.82) and among kindergarten children the mean dmft score was 3.42 (3.77).

Conclusion: A significant negative association between dental caries experience and frequency of cleaning the teeth was found in this study. The caries prevalence and mean dmft was higher among anganwadi children. Prevalence of filled teeth was higher among kindergarten children.

Key words: Caries experience, Dentition status, Pre – school

Introduction

Dental caries remains the principal disease affecting pre-school children. It is the most prevalent unmet health care need of children. At the point of cavitations, caries experience is irreversible and cumulative and prevention is both preferable and possible. This care must start early.

Studies have shown that not all children are at equal risk for developing caries¹-². If a high risk group of children with primary tooth caries can be identified and characterized, it would be useful to determine whether preventive measures should be applied to all children, or targeted for those with elevated risk. In a time of increasing costs of dental services, these questions have important implications. For this we need to have a baseline data. Hence an attempt has been made to collect baseline data by assessing dental caries experience of children aged 3-5 years going to anganwadi and kindergarten in Mangalore.

Aim

To assess the dental caries experience of pre-school children aged 3-5 years in Mangalore.

Materials and methods

This cross-sectional study was conducted on 768 children aged 3-5 year olds going to anganwadi and kindergarten schools in Mangalore.

The list of kindergarten and anganwadi schools in Mangalore was obtained from the Mangalore City Corporation Office. Before starting the study official permission was obtained from all the concerned authorities;

1. Child Development Project Officer
2. Head Master/Mistress/Principal of Kindergarten/ Anganwadi schools
3. Class teacher
4. Parents

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