

Caries prevalence and treatment need amongst children in an Arabian community

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Abstract - A total of 1400 Saudi Arabian children in age groups 6-12 and 1-5 yr in private and public schools were examined for dental caries and treatment need in the cities of Jeddah (<0.30 ppm fluoride in drinking water), Rabagh (0.77 ppm F-) and Mecca (2.47 ppm F-). The mean dmft in 6-yr-olds in private schools in Jeddah was 2.9 compared with 6.3 in public schools ($P < 0.001$). The deciduous component accounted for 65% of the total dmft in private schools and 76% in public schools in Jeddah. The mean dmft values in private and public schools in Rabagh were 1.5 and 2.5 respectively and 2.7 and 2.5 in Mecca; the deciduous component accounted for approximately 65% in all groups. The figures for permanent teeth in 12- and 1-5-yr-olds show similar trends with caries levels being the highest in public schools in Jeddah; approximately 60% of the total DMFT was attributable to the deciduous component in both school types in all three cities. Most of the treatment required in all three cities comprised one- or two-surface fillings. The need for treatment was significantly higher in public schools.

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