Dental Caries Experience and Associated Risk Factors in 6-13-Year-Old School Children in Dharan Submetropolitan City: A Cross Sectional Study

**Sigdel B.** 1 Dali M, 2 Shrestha S, 3 Baral D, 4 Koirala B 5

1 Junior Resident 2nd year, Department of Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry, CODS, BPKIHS

2 Associate professor, Department of Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry, CODS, BPKIHS

3 Assistant professor: Department of Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry, CODS, BPKIHS

4 Assistant professor: School of Public Health and Community Medicine, BPKIHS

5 Professor and HOD, Department of Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry, CODS, BPKIHS

**ABSTRACT**

**Introduction:** Dental caries is a major public oral health problem globally due to its high prevalence and significant social impact. 50% of the Nepalese children are suffering from this preventable disease. Baseline data with good understanding of dental caries and its associated risk factors are deemed necessary for setting appropriate oral health goals to help implement necessary preventive strategies better.

**Objective:** The objective of this study was to determine dental caries experience along with its associated risk factors and association in school going children of 6-13-year-old from Dharan sub-metropolitan city.

**Materials and Method:** A community based cross sectional survey was conducted (n=680). Pretested standardized close-ended questionnaire to be answered by the parents was used for information regarding associated risk factors and single examiner recorded deft/defs and DMFT/DMFS.
**Result:** Dental caries experience in our study was found to be 61.6%, primary dentition (48.25%) and permanent dentition (34.4%). Statistically significant association of caries prevalence was seen with grade, feeding habits, and dental visit (p<0.001).

**Conclusion:** The present study demonstrated dental caries to have a significant burden in school children of Dharan, especially with primary dentition. Children with habit of snacking in-between meals and consuming sweets at night were found to have high caries experience. All these could be due to lack of awareness regarding regular oral care and dental visits. Hence, our study proposes a need for a meticulous planning and strong local action for improving the standards of oral health for these children taking into account the multiple factors associated with it.

**Keywords:** Caries experience, cross-sectional, risk factors, school children.

**Correspondence:** Dr. Bhawana Sigdel (Junior Resident 2nd year, Department of Pedodontics And Preventive Dentistry, Email: bhawana.sigdel@gmail.com), 9779846106682

**Code no of IRC:** IRC/1080/017