

ABSTRACT

Objective: The objective of this study was to assess the prevalence and discuss some aspects of risk indicators for dental caries in 15 year old adolescent school children in MOH area, Moratuwa.

Method: A descriptive cross sectional study was carried out and a total of 495 fifteen year old adolescent school children were selected from 18 schools in Moratuwa MOH area using multi stage cluster sampling method combined with probability proportionate to size (PPS) Technique. Research instruments consisted of a pre tested self administered questionnaire and a clinical oral examination sheet for all children. Socio economical status of parents and gender, ethnicity, some practices and habits, knowledge, awareness and pattern of service utilization in relation to dental caries were assessed as risk indications for dental caries by using the questionnaire. Prevalence of dental caries was assessed as DMFT and DMFS by clinical oral examination sheet.

Results: Prevalence of dental caries was 50.3%. It was (52%) high among females compared to (48%) among males. Mean DMFT and DMFS were 1.23 and 2.48 respectively. Mean DMFT was low compared to 2.5 in N.O.H.S. 94/95. Statistically significant differences were observed between dental caries experience and ethnicity, religion, living for last 5 years, frequency of visiting a dental clinic and knowledge about dental caries ($P < 0.05$). Statistically significant differences were also found between monthly family income and the material used for brushing teeth and service utilization and frequency of sweets consumption. As a percentage 66.9% had a 'good' knowledge about dental caries. Majority (31.8%) had stated school dental clinic as the closest dental clinic.

Conclusions and Recommendations: The study revealed still there was 50.3% prevalence of dental caries though it was low compared to 70% in N.O.H.S. 94/95. Therefore further oral health education, promotion, preventive and control measures should be considered as priority