

A study of occlusal anomalies and tooth loss in children aged 13-15 years in Nairobi

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Abstract:

Two hundred and fifty one African children aged 13-15 years were examined for specific intra- and inter-arch malocclusions and tooth loss. The children were from 6 schools randomly selected from 154 primary schools in Nairobi. Overall, 47% of the children were found to have malocclusion, the most frequently encountered anomaly being crowding. Some of the anomalies showed prevalences which differed markedly from those previously reported for American and British Caucasians of comparable age-groups. Nineteen per cent of the children had missing teeth due to caries, 5.6% due to extractions as part of orthodontic treatment and 13% due to other reasons. The mean number of permanent teeth missing due to caries was 0.2, orthodontic treatment 0.1 and due to other reasons 0.2. Almost all the teeth lost as a result of caries were molars and those due to orthodontic indications were premolars. No teeth were recorded as missing due to periodontal disease or trauma. The study indicated a need to exercise caution in trying to relate the numerical values for prevalence of malocclusions in current textbooks to the present population. The results also showed that the proportion of permanent teeth lost was small.