

Caries in Private and Public Schools in Saudi Arabia.
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The prevalence of dental caries in 6-, 12- and 15-year-olds in Jeddah (fluoride level in drinking water <0.3ppm) was recently shown to be considerably higher than in corresponding age groups in Rabagh (0.8 ppm) and Mecca (2.5 ppm) (Abstract No. 35 ORCA 1988). The aim of this project is to estimate caries levels in public and private schools in these 3 cities. A total of 160 children in each age group in each city was examined for caries which was diagnosed at cavitation level. Radiographs were not used. The mean dmft in 6-year-old subjects attending private schools in Jeddah was 2.9 compared with 6.3 in those attending public schools. The corresponding figures in Rabagh were 1.5 and 2.c whilst in Mecca the figures were 2.7 and 2.8 respectively. In 12-year-olds the mean DMFT in private schools in Jeddah was 2.1 whereas in public schools it was 5.1. The corresponding figures for Rabagh were 1.6 and 1.8'whilst in Mecca they were 1.5 and 2.3 respectively. A similar trend emerges in 15-year-olds with considerably higher caries levels in public than in private schools in Jeddah; in Rabagh and Mecca differences are less apparent. It is concluded that the prevalence of dental caries is higher in those attending public schools especially in an area with <.3 ppm fluoride in the drinking water.