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Socio-behavioral factors on severe early childhood caries in Istanbul**Unsal G, Guven Y and Aktoren O**
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Objective: Socio-behavioral factors are of vital importance on onset of severe early childhood caries (S-ECC). The objective of this study is to evaluate the influence of the socio-behavioral factors on children with S-ECC living in Istanbul.

Methods: 40 children with SECC (mean age: 52.93 ± 11.5 months) and 40 caries-free (CF) children (mean age: 49.43 ± 12.47 months) (as controls) attended to Pediatric Dentistry Clinics, Istanbul University were enrolled in the study. The oral health status of children was assessed by caries indices (dmft, dmfs), plaque index (PI) and modified gingival index (MGI) and parents were asked to fulfill a questionnaire regarding information on education and socioeconomic levels, sugar intake, feeding and oral hygiene practices and dental visits. Ethical approval and informed consent were obtained. The findings were analyzed by Student's t, Mann Whitney U, Chi-Square and Fisher's Exact χ^2 tests.

Results: The mean dft, dfs, PI, MGI in SECC were determined as 13.85 ± 3.43 , 28.55 ± 11.94 , 0.79 ± 0.45 , 0.42 ± 0.50 , respectively. The SECC group had significantly higher ($p < 0.01$) PI and MGI scores than CF group. The low social and educational status of parents were found significantly associated with S-ECC ($p < 0.01$). A positive correlation was obtained between the high frequency of daily sugar intake and SECC ($p < 0.01$). The findings confirmed that the parents' feeding practices (only breast feeding, only bottle feeding, breast and bottle feeding) were not associated with SECC ($p > 0.05$). The mean onset time for tooth brushing in SECC group (32.5 ± 9.53 months) was determined significantly late ($p < 0.01$) than CF group (19.6 ± 8.03 months). The frequencies for daily tooth brushing and regular dental visits were found significantly higher ($p < 0.01$) in CF group than SECC group.

Conclusion: The findings of this study have demonstrated that the socio-behavioral factors, low social and parental education levels, high daily sugar intake, late-onset time for tooth brushing, inadequate oral hygiene, irregular dentist visits, are significantly associated with SECC

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