

Artificial sucking habits and malocclusion in 3-5-year-olds in Nairobi

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Abstract

To determine the prevalence of sucking habits and its association with anterior open bite, posterior cross-bite and transverse dimensions of the Jaws In 3-5-year-olds in Nairobi. Design: A cross-sectional study. Setting: Nairobi, Kenya. Subjects: Three hundred and four children aged 3-5 years (155 boys and 149 girls). Results: The prevalence of digit suckers was 15.8%, and pacifier users 1.0%. Those with anterior open bite constituted 7.6%. The average intercanine archwidth between 53-63 was 3d.8mm and between 73-83 was 25.4mm. A statistically significant correlation (Pearson!) was observed between digit-sucking and anterior open bite ($P < 0.01$). Conclusion: The present study forms a baseline for future trends in sucking habits among children in Nairobi, Kenya. Low prevalence of sucking habits was found. The average difference between the upper and lower intercanine arch widths was relatively high and prevalence of posterior cross-bite was low. A significant correlation was observed between anterior open bite and digit sucking. The need for orthodontic treatment due to sucking habit was low among children in Nairobi.