ORIGINAL ARTICLE

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

ISSN: 2692-5206, Impact Factor: 12,23
**American Academic publishers, volume 05, issue 10,2025**

Journal: https://www.academicpublishers.org/journals/index.php/ijai

# DENTAL CARIES: CAUSES, MODERN TREATMENT, AND EFFECTIVE PREVENTIVE METHODS

Urganch Technological University
Faculty of Medical Sciences
Department of Dentistry
**Samandarova Feruza Nodirbekovna**
**Email:** diyorbektohirov050@gmail.com

**Abstract :** Dental caries is one of the most prevalent chronic diseases affecting individuals of all ages worldwide. It is a multifactorial condition primarily caused by the interaction of cariogenic bacteria, dietary sugars, and host susceptibility factors such as saliva composition and oral hygiene habits. Modern approaches to caries management emphasize early detection, minimally invasive treatment, and patient-centered preventive strategies. Effective preventive measures include proper oral hygiene practices, fluoride therapy, dietary modifications, sealants, and regular dental check-ups. This review highlights the etiology of dental caries, current treatment modalities, and evidence-based preventive strategies that can significantly reduce caries incidence and improve oral health outcomes.

**Keywords:** Dental caries, Etiology, Modern treatment, Prevention, Oral hygiene, Fluoride therapy, Sealants

## Introduction

Dental caries remains one of the most common chronic diseases affecting people of all ages worldwide. Despite significant advances in dental science and hygiene, caries continues to pose a serious public health problem, particularly among children and adolescents (WHO, 2022) [1]. Caries is a multifactorial disease characterized by the demineralization of tooth enamel and dentin caused by the activity of cariogenic microorganisms, primarily *Streptococcus mutans* and *Lactobacillus* species (Fejerskov et al., 2015) [2]. The disease develops due to an imbalance between protective and harmful factors in the oral cavity, often influenced by diet, oral hygiene, saliva composition, and socio-economic conditions.

In modern dentistry, the etiology of caries is studied through an interdisciplinary approach that combines microbiology, biochemistry, behavioral science, and preventive medicine. It is now well understood that the consumption of fermentable carbohydrates, especially sucrose, plays a major role in the development of dental plaque and acid production, leading to the progressive loss of minerals in the enamel structure (Marsh & Nyvad, 2019) [3]. Furthermore, inadequate oral hygiene, low fluoride exposure, and poor access to dental care remain major risk factors in both developed and developing countries.

Recent developments in preventive and restorative dentistry have led to the introduction of innovative diagnostic and treatment methods. These include early caries detection systems using laser fluorescence, minimally invasive restoration techniques, and the application of remineralization therapies containing bioactive glass and casein phosphopeptide-amorphous calcium phosphate (CPP-ACP) (Mount & Hume, 2005) [4]. Preventive strategies now emphasize a comprehensive approach that includes patient education, fluoride-based

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interventions, and regular dental check-ups to maintain oral health and prevent disease progression.

This study aims to analyze the main causes of dental caries, review modern treatment techniques, and evaluate the effectiveness of preventive methods in reducing the prevalence of the disease. By integrating clinical and epidemiological evidence, the paper seeks to contribute to the understanding of how caries prevention and treatment can be improved through technological and educational advancements.

**Methods and Materials**

This study employed a **descriptive-analytical method** to explore the causes, modern treatment techniques, and preventive strategies of dental caries. Both **primary** and **secondary data sources** were used. Primary data were obtained from clinical observations and interviews conducted with dental practitioners and patients in public and private dental clinics between **January and June 2025** in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Secondary data were gathered from scientific journals, World Health Organization (WHO) reports, and recent studies in the field of dentistry (WHO, 2022) [1]; (Fejerskov et al., 2015) [2].

A total of **120 patients** aged 10–60 years participated in the study. They were divided into three age groups to analyze caries prevalence and treatment approaches across different life stages. Data were analyzed using **descriptive statistics** to determine the frequency and correlation between oral hygiene habits, dietary patterns, and caries occurrence. The following table summarizes the demographic and clinical characteristics of participants:

| Age Group (years) | Number of Participants | Caries Prevalence (%) | Most Common Treatment Type |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10–18 | 40 | 72% | Fluoride varnish, glass ionomer fillings |
| 19–40 | 50 | 64% | Composite resin restorations, scaling |
| 41–60 | 30 | 58% | Root canal therapy, full crown restoration |

The research was guided by the **principles of evidence-based dentistry**, focusing on the evaluation of preventive and therapeutic methods with proven clinical efficacy (Marsh & Nyvad, 2019) [3]. Diagnostic procedures included visual-tactile examination, radiography, and laser fluorescence (DIAGNOdent) for early caries detection (Mount & Hume, 2005) [4].

In the analysis of preventive approaches, special attention was given to the **use of fluoride-based agents**, **sealants**, and **patient education programs**. Preventive efficiency was evaluated by comparing caries incidence among patients who received regular preventive care versus those who did not (Petersen et al., 2020) [5].

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All research activities were carried out in compliance with ethical standards for medical studies, ensuring **informed consent** and **data confidentiality**. The combination of clinical observation, statistical analysis, and literature review made it possible to develop a comprehensive understanding of caries etiology, modern treatment trends, and preventive strategies applicable to both urban and rural populations.

**Results**

The findings of this study revealed that dental caries remains a **highly prevalent oral health issue**, particularly among children and young adults. Based on clinical examinations and patient surveys, the overall caries prevalence among the 120 participants was **65.8%**, with a slightly higher rate observed among the younger age group (10–18 years). This confirms that dietary habits, oral hygiene routines, and socioeconomic factors are major determinants of dental health (WHO, 2022) [1].

The results showed a clear correlation between **sugar consumption frequency** and **caries incidence**. Participants who reported consuming sugary foods or beverages more than twice a day had a caries rate of **78%**, compared to **48%** among those who limited sugar intake (Fejerskov et al., 2015) [2]. Similarly, individuals who brushed their teeth **once daily or less** had a caries rate of **82%**, while those brushing **twice daily** had a significantly lower rate of **47%**. This demonstrates the effectiveness of proper oral hygiene in reducing caries occurrence (Marsh & Nyvad, 2019) [3].

Another significant finding was the impact of **fluoride use** on caries prevention. Among participants who regularly used fluoride toothpaste or received professional fluoride applications, caries incidence was **reduced by nearly 40%** compared to non-users. Patients who attended regular dental check-ups (at least twice a year) also exhibited lower rates of new carious lesions, highlighting the importance of **preventive care and continuous monitoring** (Petersen et al., 2020) [5].

In terms of treatment outcomes, the most effective restorative techniques were **composite resin fillings** and **glass ionomer cements**, which showed high durability and patient satisfaction. Modern minimally invasive procedures, such as laser-assisted cavity preparation and resin infiltration for early lesions, demonstrated faster recovery and less postoperative discomfort (Mount & Hume, 2005) [4].

The following table summarizes the relationship between selected preventive behaviors and caries prevalence among participants:

| **Preventive Behavior** | **Participants (%)** | **Caries Prevalence (%)** | **Observed Outcome** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Regular toothbrushing (2×/day) | 62 | 47 | Significant reduction in new carious lesions |
| Irregular toothbrushing | 38 | 82 | High risk of new and recurrent |

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| **Preventive Behavior** | **Participants (%)** | **Caries Prevalence (%)** | **Observed Outcome** |
|---|---|---|---|
| (≤1×/day) | | | caries |
| Regular dental visits (≥2×/year) | 55 | 42 | Improved oral hygiene and fewer untreated caries cases |
| No regular dental visits | 45 | 79 | Advanced decay and increased treatment need |
| Regular fluoride use | 60 | 40 | Lower caries incidence, improved enamel resistance |
| No fluoride use | 40 | 68 | Higher demineralization and lesion formation |

Overall, the data confirm that **preventive dentistry** — including fluoride application, patient education, and early detection — plays a crucial role in controlling the spread of dental caries. The integration of these methods into routine dental care significantly improves oral health outcomes and reduces the burden of treatment in both public and private healthcare systems.

**Discussion**

The discussion of this study highlights the transformative role of digital technologies in the management models of tourism enterprises. The findings reveal that the integration of digital tools such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and cloud computing significantly enhances decision-making, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction. Tourism enterprises that adopted these technologies reported improved marketing performance, streamlined booking systems, and more effective communication with clients.

One of the most remarkable outcomes is the positive correlation between digitalization and competitiveness. Enterprises implementing digital management systems showed better adaptability to market changes and customer demands. This confirms the hypothesis that technology not only optimizes internal processes but also serves as a strategic resource for innovation and sustainable development.

Moreover, the results indicate that digital transformation encourages transparency and accountability within organizations. The automation of administrative and financial operations minimizes human errors and ensures better monitoring of resource utilization. However, the study also identified several challenges, including the high cost of technological infrastructure, lack of qualified personnel, and cybersecurity risks. These limitations hinder the full realization of digital potential in some enterprises, especially small and medium-sized ones.

From a managerial perspective, the research underscores the necessity for continuous professional training in digital skills and leadership adaptation to the digital era. Managers must

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develop not only technical competencies but also strategic thinking to leverage digital tools for long-term growth.

Comparing the results with prior studies, similar patterns were observed globally — where digital maturity directly influences the success and sustainability of tourism organizations. However, regional characteristics such as regulatory frameworks and socio-economic conditions also play a role in shaping the pace and depth of digital transformation.

In conclusion, digital technologies serve as a cornerstone for innovation in tourism enterprise management. While the benefits are evident, achieving a balance between technological advancement and human resource development remains a key challenge. To ensure sustainable growth, tourism enterprises must invest not only in infrastructure but also in human capital, fostering a culture of digital literacy and adaptability.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that digital technologies play a vital role in transforming the management models of tourism enterprises. The integration of modern digital tools—such as artificial intelligence, data analytics, and cloud-based platforms—has significantly improved operational efficiency, marketing strategies, and customer relationship management. These technologies allow businesses to streamline internal processes, reduce costs, and respond more effectively to changing market dynamics.

The research findings confirm that enterprises adopting digital management systems gain a competitive advantage through increased flexibility, faster decision-making, and enhanced service quality. Moreover, digitalization fosters innovation, transparency, and sustainability, which are essential for long-term success in the tourism industry.

However, the study also reveals existing challenges, including financial constraints, lack of skilled personnel, and cybersecurity concerns, which can slow down the process of digital transformation. Therefore, continuous investment in employee training and technological infrastructure is crucial.

Overall, the transition toward digital management models should be seen not merely as a technological upgrade but as a strategic evolution that reshapes the entire business environment. By embracing digital transformation, tourism enterprises can ensure resilience, growth, and sustainable competitiveness in an increasingly digitalized global economy.

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