

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 51844

Date: 24/05/2025

Title: "PREVALENCE OF DENTAL CARIES AND ITS CORRELATES AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN LUFWANYAMA DISTRICT, ZAMBIA"

Recommendation:

- ✓ Accept as it is
- Accept after minor revision.....
- Accept after major revision
- Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

| Rating | Excel. | Good | Fair | Poor |
|----------------|--------|------|------|------|
| Originality | | ✓ | | |
| Techn. Quality | | ✓ | | |
| Clarity | | ✓ | | |
| Significance | | ✓ | | |

Reviewer Name: Dr. S. K. Nath

Date: 25/05/2025

Reviewer's Comment for Publication:

The study reveals a high prevalence (38.2%) of dental caries among primary school children in Lufwanyama district, predominantly influenced by modifiable factors such as dietary habits and oral hygiene practices. Addressing these factors through community education, promoting regular brushing, and dietary modifications could significantly reduce the disease burden. The findings emphasize the need for preventive strategies and routine dental health education targeting this vulnerable population.

Reviewer's Comment / Report

Strengths:

- Comprehensive Methodology:** The study employs a cross-sectional design with a sizeable sample of 1,228 pupils, enhancing the reliability of prevalence estimates and associations.
- Use of Qualified Examiners:** Dental examinations were conducted by a registered dentist, ensuring accurate clinical assessments.
- Multifactorial Analysis:** The study investigates various factors, including dietary habits, oral hygiene practices, and perceptions, providing a holistic understanding of contributors to dental caries.
- Public Health Relevance:** The findings are directly applicable to policy formulation and intervention planning in similar settings.

Weaknesses:

- Limited Generalizability:** Being confined to Lufwanyama district, results may not be representative of other regions or populations.
- Subjective Data Collection:** Some information, especially dietary habits and perceptions, was self-reported, which could lead to recall or social desirability bias.
- Potential Confounding Factors:** Although multivariate analysis was performed, unmeasured confounders like socioeconomic status and access to dental care may influence findings.
- Limited Longitudinal Data:** As a cross-sectional study, causality cannot be established between identified factors and dental caries.