

Knowledge Among Parents about Importance of Primary Dentition

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Abstract

Aim: Dental caries is very common in primary dentition because of improper oral hygiene and increased intake of sucrose. The parents are the one who take care of their children and make decision for them. Often parents are responsible for the oral care of their children. The aim of this study is to evaluate the knowledge among parents about importance of primary dentition.

Objectives: To evaluate the attitude and knowledge of parents towards importance of maintaining primary dentition in their children.

Materials and Method: The study was conducted among parents visiting dental institution, Chennai. A total of 200 questionnaire containing 15 questions were prepared for data collection and were personally distributed to parents. A number of 100 fathers and 100 mothers were included in the study.

Results: The study shows that literate parents had more knowledge about primary dentition when compared to illiterate parents.

Conclusion: Knowledge about primary dentition can be increased in parents by conducting oral awareness program in schools. There is a need cultivate positive attitude among parents to raise their knowledge about dental awareness.

Keywords: Parents, dental caries, primary teeth, oral habits.

Introduction

“Health is wealth”. Health is not only merely absence of disease but also complete state where in the person is physically, emotionally and mentally sound. General wellbeing is directly co-related to the oral health and vice-versa. Thus, general health cannot be maintained well with poor oral hygiene.

Dental caries is very common in primary dentition because of improper oral hygiene and increased intake of sucrose. The parents are the one who takes care of their children and make decision for them^[1]. Often parents who are responsible for the oral care of children believe that since primary teeth eventually shed off, it is not worthwhile to spend time/money on providing good oral health to children^[2]. Poor attitude of parents towards oral health of infants and young children are associated with increased caries prevalence^[3]. Hence

they should have knowledge about primary teeth, their health and caring in order to build confidence in their children through primary teeth.^[4]

Objectives

To evaluate the attitude and knowledge of parents towards importance of maintaining primary dentition in their children.

Materials and Method

The study was conducted among parents visiting dental institution, Chennai. The ethical clearance was obtained from institutional review board and consent was obtained from the study participants. A preformed structured questionnaire preformed was designed in English and then translated in Tamil for illiterate parents.

All parents of children aged below 12years who

reported to dental colleges in Chennai were invited to participate in the study. A total of 200 questionnaire containing 15 questions were prepared for data collection and were personally distributed to parents. A total number of 100 fathers and 100 mothers were included in the study.

The demographic details of the parents were collected such as name, age, gender and educational qualification. The responders were then asked to indicate the most appropriate answers from the given list of option in order to assess the knowledge, awareness and perception regarding the importance of primary tooth.

The answers were evaluated to assess the knowledge and awareness about the primary teeth, their function and effects on permanent teeth. Further assessment of parent’s attitude towards treatment of decayed or infected primary teeth and their willingness to comply with the treatment option for such teeth.

Collected data were tabulated and subjected for stastical analysis using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 13.0. Distributed frequency which includes number and percentage were calculated. Chi-square analysis was used for comparison was done based upon the educational qualification grouped under literate and illiterate. The level of significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results

Caries related conditions such as pain, food impaction, sensitivity were found to be the common reason for visit to dental clinic.

TABLE 1: Gender distribution among parents accompanying children for dental treatment

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	100	50
Female	100	50
Total	200	100

There exists a highly significant P value difference between literate and illiterate parents in relation to the knowledge about reason for the visit to the dentist. Literates had better knowledge than illiterates. Most of parents stated that chronic pain or trauma as the main reason to visit to the dentist which was followed by 22% of esthetics, 17% for caries, 7% for bad breath and

bleeding gums. (Chart 1)

Approximately 46.5% of literate parents had good knowledge about treating primary tooth. (Chart 2)

Most of the parents visit General Physicians nearby in case of child’s dental problem whereas 25% of parents visit Pedodontist in case of child’s dental problem. (Chart 3)

62% of parents were unaware of fluoridated tooth paste. (Chart 4)

About 80% of parents said that oral deleterious habits can harm the developing dentition, 9.5% of parents were unaware of oral habits and 10.5% of parents had no knowledge about the effect of oral habits over developing dentition. (Chart 5)

71% of parents said that night time bottle feeding can cause dental caries and 7.5% of parents said that night time bottle feeding is not the cause for dental caries. (Chart 6)

Discussion

Attitude and practice among parents are the important factors influencing the prenatal health care of the children^[5]. Earlier studies reveal that regular dental care among children is uncommon in developing countries. It was contraindicating to American Academy of Pediatric dentistry recommendation which states that ideally infant’s oral health begins with prenatal oral health counselling for parents^[6].

Many studies found that these recommendations are not taken because of unawareness by the parents about the importance of primary dentition. In most of the studies we found that parents didn’t take care of their child’s primary tooth because of their unfamiliarity about dental treatment and poor socioeconomic status which was truly correlating with our study^[7].

In our study 68% of parents stated that waste of money as the reason for not treating primary tooth which correlates with the study done by Anjana Mounissamy et al^[8].

Relevant to prevention of caries, in our study 67% of parents selected the option all the above (reducing snack content, brushing twice a day, getting provision advice) but in the study of Mahesh Ramakrishnan et al 68% of parents reported reducing snack containing

sugar prevent caries. We found that there is increased awareness about prevention of caries among the parents in our study^[9].

In our study, when questioning to parents regarding the child's dental problem 77% of parents visit the General Physician nearby which corresponds to study conducted by AnjanaMounissamy et al. Majority of illiterate participants in our study were not aware of consulting Pedodontist at right time^[8].

In case of treating primary tooth, most of the parents prefer to leave the treatment decision to the Dentist which truly correlates with the study conducted with the study conducted by JyothsnaVittobaSetty et al^[10].

In our study we found that 54% of parents took their child to dental clinic when child complains of pain which was similar to study conducted by Janhvi et al^[11].

We found that 62% of parents were unaware of regarding fluoridated tooth paste which correlates with the study done by Bhavneet Kaur et al. Our study shows that both literate and illiterate parents have low awareness of fluoridated tooth paste^[12].

The outcome of our study recommends effective oral awareness program among parents regarding caries prevention. However, all parents agreed that dentist played a most important role in achieving best oral health outcome in their children. We need to initiate more dental awareness program for parents as well as to spread the oral health awareness in our society.^[13]

Conclusion

Parents play an important role in promoting good oral habits in their children. There is a need cultivate positive attitude among parents to raise their knowledge about dental awareness.

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