



Research Paper

Oral Health Awareness & Knowledge Amongst Pre-Schoolers, Parents And Teachers Of A Preschool In Jodhpur City, Rajasthan, India

Dr Yashna Chowdhary, Siddhant Chowdhary

Dr Yashna Chowdhary, Intern, Gold Medalist in final year from RUHS College of Dental Sciences (GDC), Jaipur, Rajasthan

Siddhant Chowdhary, Student, Global International School, Jodhpur
Address: H no. 48, Polo 1st Paota, Jodhpur, Rajasthan

ABSTRACT:

The objective of this research was to determine oral health awareness and knowledge amongst Preschoolers, their Parents and teachers of a Preschool in Jodhpur city. A cross sectional study was conducted for 25 Preschoolers, 25 Parents and 6 Teachers of a Playschool in Jodhpur. The result of oral health awareness and knowledge amongst Preschoolers, their Parents and teachers in a Preschool in Jodhpur city shows the lack of dental hygiene awareness. There is a need to engage right from preschool days to educate the preschoolers about the importance of good oral hygiene leads to a better dental health.

The study on oral health awareness and knowledge amongst Preschoolers, their Parents and teachers in a Preschool in Jodhpur city demonstrated that we need to educate them about the importance of dental health and oral hygiene. With this study we could make certain recommendation to the parents about how to improve the oral hygiene of preschoolers. Preschooler having any condition were recommended for to schedule a visit to a dentist.

Received 01 July, 2023; Revised 08 July, 2023; Accepted 11 July, 2023 © The author(s) 2023.

Published with open access at www.questjournals.org

I. INTRODUCTION

Oral health is the state of oral cavity structures and tissues that enables individuals to perform essential functions like eating, speaking, smiling, etc. Thus, a better oral health leads to a healthier lifestyle.

It has been found that young children's oral hygiene is influenced by their parents' knowledge [1]. Children depend on their parents for maintenance of their oral health [2]. It is very important for preschoolers, parents and teachers to know about the importance of awareness of good oral health. Those who are aware lead a healthier lifestyle. Parents should take good care of oral health of a child and teachers should inculcate healthy oral habits right from the beginning of pre-school.

Good oral health means healthy teeth and gums which is a very important aspect of overall health of an individual. Gingivitis and tooth decay can be prevented by maintaining good oral hygiene practices. But the lack of oral health awareness nowadays is leading to various problems and complications arising in later stages of life like malocclusion. Pre-school children may be at an increased risk of developing oral health problems. Thus, a study was conducted to determine oral health awareness and to develop good oral care habits amongst 2.5-5-year-old preschoolers, parents and teachers in a preschool in Jodhpur city, Rajasthan, India.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross sectional questionnaire survey [3] was conducted for 25 preschoolers, 25 parents and 6 teachers. An exercise was conducted for preschoolers to develop oral health awareness. Along with this, tooth brushing technique was demonstrated to all the children and their parents. They were also told about different oral hygiene practices like use of dental floss, mouth wash, powered tooth brushes and tongue cleaner through models.

Before conducting the study, permission was taken from the Principal of the Playschool in Jodhpur city and consent was taken from the parents of preschoolers.

The study started with a general dental checkup which was done for all the preschoolers in which they were checked for any abnormality and the data was collected. Then a set of three questions were asked from the preschoolers of age 2.5 to 5 years. Each question was well explained to them.

Questionnaire:

Name:
Age:
Sex:
Diagnosis:

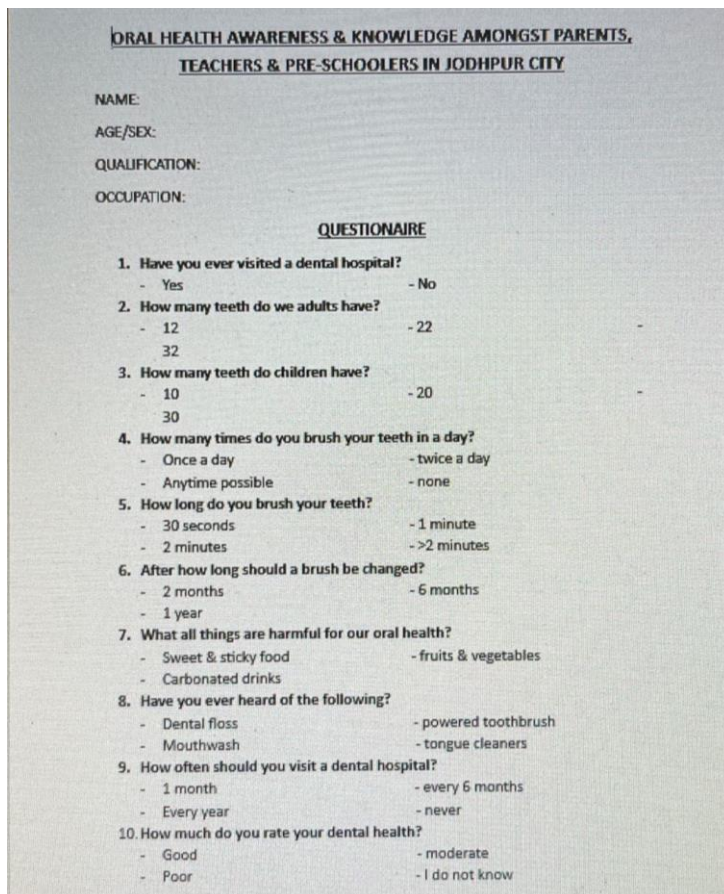
1. How many times do you brush your teeth?

2. Are Chocolates and Juices good for oral health?

3. What is the colour of our teeth?

Then, a set of questionnaire survey comprising of 10 questions with multiple choice answers was handed over to all the parents and teachers of Preschool. There were 25 parents and 6 teachers present in the school. This survey was conducted by an examiner and an assistant under the supervision of a staff member. The assistant helped the examiner in distributing the questionnaire[4]. Each question was well explained. Both the parents and teachers were ensured of the confidentiality of their answers.

Questionnaire:



The questionnaire was taken back, data was analyzed manually. Then, an experiment was demonstrated to children to explain adverse effects of sugar to our teeth and health. The experiment was done using warm water, two glasses, two spoons, yeast and sugar. Water and yeast were added in

the first glass and warm water, yeast and sugar were added in the second glass. Children were asked to stir both the mixes with different spoons.

On stirring, the solution started foaming and increasing. With this experiment, children were explained that yeast thrives in sugar similarly bacteria thrive in mouth. This experiment showed that similar reaction takes place in mouth on consumption of sweet food products and beverages. [5]

Thereafter, preschoolers were shown different models to maintain good oral hygiene like manual toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, mouth wash, powered tooth brush and tongue cleaners. Tooth brushing technique was also demonstrated to the preschoolers and they were explained that how brushing our teeth keeps them healthy and protects them from bacteria.

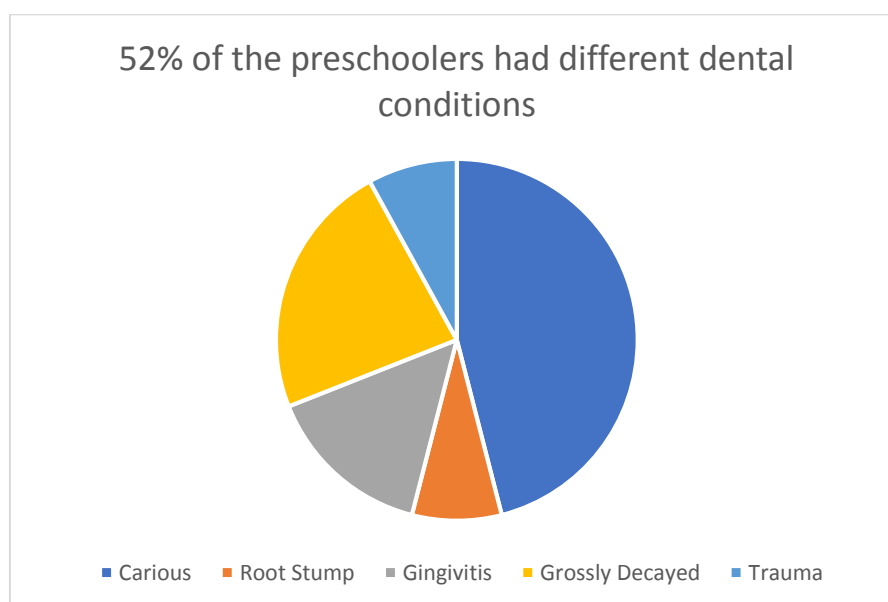
III. OBSERVATIONS

The Preschoolers comprised of 7 boys and 18 girls with a mean age of 3.476 years.

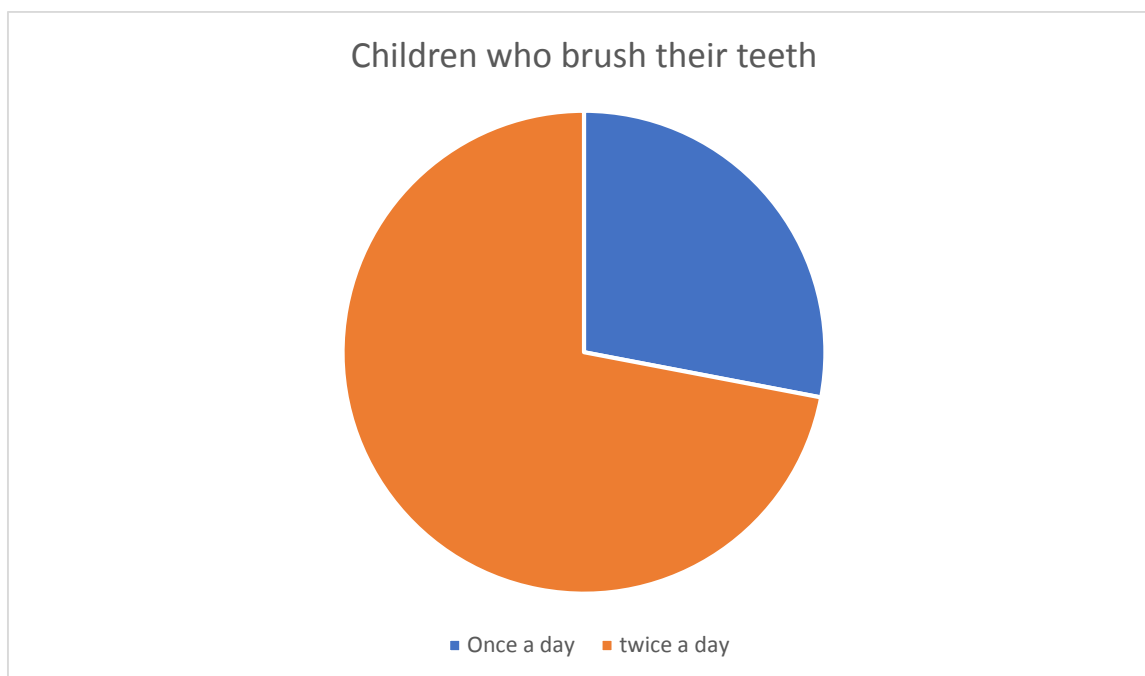
Questionnaire answered by preschoolers as under:

Questions	Answers
1. How many times do you brush your teeth?	Once a day – 18/25 Twice a day – 7/25
2. Are chocolates and juices good for oral health?	Yes – 6/25 No – 19/25
3. What is the colour of our teeth?	Yellow/white – 15/25 Other colour – 10/25

- a. The analysis of the results showed the lack of oral hygiene awareness amongst preschoolers.
- b. 52% of the preschoolers had different dental conditions like shown below in the pie chart and have one carious tooth to maximum seven carious teeth in a single child.



- c. 24% of the children believed that consuming chocolates and juices are good for health.
- d. 76% knew about its negative effects.
- e. 28% of preschoolers brush their teeth twice a day and 72% brush once a day.
- f. 60% kids knew that healthy teeth are generally white or yellow in colour.



Questionnaire answered by parents as under:

1.	Have you ever visited a dental hospital?	Yes – 8/25	No – 17/25		
2.	How many teeth do we adults have?	12 – 0	22 – 10/25	32 – 15/25	
3.	How many teeth do children have?	10 – 0	20 – 15/25	30 – 10/25	
4.	How many times do you brush your teeth in a day?	Once a day – 17/25	Twice a day – 08/25	Anytime possible – 0	None – 0
5.	How long do you brush your teeth?	30 sec – 3/25	1 min – 10/25	2 mins – 10/25	>2 minutes – 2/25
6.	After how long should a brush be changed?	2 months – 8/25	6 months – 1/25	1 year – 2/25	
7.	What all things are harmful for our health? (Can choose multiple options)	Sweet & sticky food – 16/25	Fruits & vegetables- 1/25	Carbonated drinks – 14/25	
8.	Have you ever heard of the following? (Can choose multiple options)	Dental floss – 5/25	Powered toothbrush – 5/25	Mouthwash – 10/25	Tongue cleaners – 12/25
9.	How often should you visit a dental hospital?	1 month – 1/25	Every 6 months – 5/25	Every year – 5/25	Never – 14/25
10.	How much do you rate your dental health?	Good – 20/25	Moderate – 5/25	Poor – 0	I do not know - 0

- a. 68% parents have never visited a dental hospital or a dentist.
- b. 47% knew that adults have 32 teeth and 60% knew the children have 20 teeth.
- c. 68% parents brush their teeth once a day.
- d. 60% parents prefer using the same brush for 6 months.
- e. 20% parents were aware of dental floss and powered toothbrush.
- f. 56% parents never intend on visiting a dental hospital.
- g. Even with poor oral hygiene knowledge, 80% parents have rated their oral health as 'good'.

Questionnaire answered by teachers as under:

1.	Have you ever visited a dental hospital?	Yes – 2/6	No – 4/6		
2.	How many teeth do we adults have?	12 – 0	22 – 0	32 – 6/6	
3.	How many teeth do children have?	10 – 0	20 – 6/6	30 – 0	
4.	How many times do you brush your teeth in a day?	Once a day – 5/6	Twice a day – 1/6	Anytime possible – 0	None – 0
5.	How long do you brush your teeth?	30 sec – 2/6	1 min – 2/6	2 mins – 2/6	>2 minutes – 0
6.	After how long should a brush be changed?	2 months – 4/6	6 months – 2/6	1 year – 0	
7.	What all things are harmful for our health? (Can choose multiple options)	Sweet & sticky food – 3/6	Fruits & vegetables- 1/6	Carbonated drinks – 4/6	
8.	Have you ever heard of the following? (Can choose multiple options)	Dental floss – 1/6	Powered toothbrush – 1/6	Mouthwash – 5/6	Tongue cleaners – 2/6
9.	How often should you visit a dental hospital?	1 month – 0	Every 6 months –	Every year – 0	Never – 5/6

10.	How much do you rate your dental health?	Good – 4/6	1/6 Moderate – 0	Poor – 1/6	I do not know – 1/6
-----	--	------------	---------------------	------------	------------------------

- a. 67% teachers have never visited a dental hospital in their lives.
- b. All the teachers were aware with the number of teeth in adults and children.
- c. 83% teachers brush their teeth once a day.
- d. 67% brush their teeth twice a day.
- e. 83% teachers have only heard of the term mouthwash.
- f. 83% teachers never plan on visiting a dental hospital.
- g. It was surprising to see that only, 67% teachers ranked their oral health as ‘good’, rest 32% ranked it ‘poor’.

IV. CONCLUSION

- a. The study on oral health awareness and knowledge amongst Preschoolers, their Parents and teachers in a Preschool in Jodhpur city demonstrated that we need to educate them about the importance of dental health and oral hygiene.
 - b. The study showed that more than 50% preschoolers, parents and teachers have never visited a dentist or a dental hospital.
 - c. The preschoolers, parents and teachers lack oral hygiene awareness.
 - d. With this study we could make certain recommendation to the parents about how to improve the oral hygiene of preschoolers. Preschooler having any condition were recommended for to schedule a visit to a dentist.
 - e. Overall, majority of parents believed that primary teeth were not important and responded inappropriately to the questions assessing their knowledge [6].
 - f. As a dentist, this study gave me an opportunity to motivate young preschoolers to maintain good oral hygiene.
- The efforts were really appreciated by the principal, teachers and the parents of the preschool.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Vasuda Rajanna, Sanjeev Khanagar, S Naganandini, Oral hygiene knowledge and practices among mothers of 3- to 6-year-old preschool children visiting anganwadis of Bangalore city, 2019, jiaphd-117-18
- [2]. Deepa Gurunathan, Joyson Moses, Shanmugaavel K Arunachalam, Knowledge, attitude and practice of mothers regarding oral hygiene of primary school children in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India, Int J Clin Pediatr Dent 2018, 338-343
- [3]. Manal A Al Mutairi, Parental knowledge, attitudes and practices of oral healthcare among preschool children in Riyadh City, Saudi Arabia, Journal of research in Medical & Dental Science, 2021, volume 9 issue 3
- [4]. Veera, Darshana, Satish, Nandita, Sibyl, Chava, Konda; Oral health related knowledge, attitude and practice among the pre university students of Mysore city; JISPCD, 4(3) p:154-158, Sep-Dec 2014
- [5]. Pediatric dental specialists of Omaha; 4 fun tooth related science experiments for kids; November 7, 2021
- [6]. Nazia Lone, Mohsin Sidiq, Asif Yousuf, Mudasir Khan, Parental awareness and attitudes towards preschool oral health of children visiting a government dental hospital of Kashmir, 2016, ijcmr, volume 3 issue 11