



## **Mothers Awareness About Children's Oral Health at Ikga Baiturrahmah**

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**Abstract**

Parents are considered to have the knowledge to teach their children basic things about maintaining a healthy body. Mother's awareness of the importance of children's dental health can be seen from their knowledge. One of the causes of dental and oral health problems in children is behavioral factors or attitudes of ignoring dental and oral hygiene. Childhood is the beginning of the formation of behavior, therefore it is expected that parents can educate their children to behave properly to maintain dental and oral health. The purpose of this study was to find out how the awareness of mothers about children's oral health at IKGA Baiturrahmah. This type of research is quantitative with analytical survey method with cross sectional research design. The population in this study are parents who seek treatment at the Baiturrahmah Hospital in March and April 2022. From the study, it was found that 40% of mothers view primary teeth as very important and the majority 60% do not realize the importance of it. For the frequency of brushing teeth, most of the mothers 60% reported that only once did they ask their children to brush their teeth. 40% of mothers agree that dental problems are also important compared to other health problems, the remaining 60% consider dental problems less important than other health problems. Educating mothers about child dental care will promote lifelong good oral hygiene habits and will significantly reduce the prevalence of oral disease. it was found that 40% of mothers view primary teeth as very important and the majority 60% do not realize the importance of it. For the frequency of brushing teeth, most of the mothers 60% reported that only once did they ask their children to brush their teeth. 40% of mothers agree that dental problems are also important compared to other health problems, the remaining 60% consider dental problems less important than other health problems. Educating mothers about child dental care will promote lifelong good oral hygiene habits and will significantly reduce the prevalence of oral disease. it was found that 40% of mothers view primary teeth as very important and the majority 60% do not realize the importance of it. For the frequency of brushing teeth, most of the mothers 60% reported that only once did they ask their children to brush their teeth. 40% of mothers agree that dental problems are also important compared to other health problems, the remaining 60% consider dental problems less important than other health problems.

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**Keywords:** *Importance of primary teeth, knowledge of oral health, mother*

## **Introduction**

Dental and oral health is often still not a priority for public health. Meanwhile, the proportion of dental and oral health problems is still very high, namely 57.6%. This high proportion is still coupled with the small percentage of patients receiving medical care, which is only around 10.2%. This will have a huge impact on society[1].

One example of a disease in dental and oral health is caries. Dental caries has a high prevalence, which varies from 49 to 83% in different countries[2]. Knowledge and practice of dentistry depend on the mother's education and demographic place of residence because research studies assume that mothers with higher education have better knowledge about oral hygiene and how to change their children's bad oral health habits, such as poor brushing habits, diet with high sugar intake, tooth decay, drinking milk or sweet liquids before going to bed finally their social class and stressful life events[3].

Maintenance of oral health is one of the efforts to improve health because it can prevent the occurrence of diseases in the oral cavity. Mother's awareness of the importance of children's dental health can be seen from their knowledge. One of the causes of dental and oral health problems in children is

behavioral factors or attitudes of ignoring dental and oral hygiene. This is marked by a lack of knowledge about the range of maternal dental and oral health care [4].

Dental and Oral Hygiene plays an important role. If dental and oral hygiene is not maintained, it will cause various diseases in the oral cavity. Shaping children's healthy behavior starts from an early age, this cannot be separated from the role of parents, especially mothers as the closest people to their children. Mother's behavior regarding dental and oral health can be used to predict the health status of children's teeth and mouth.

### **Research Methodology**

This type of research is quantitative with analytical survey method with cross sectional research design. The population in this study are parents who seek treatment at RSGM Baiturrahmah in March and April 2022. Sampling is done by using this type of sampling technique to determine the sample by accident (accidental). The researcher will take samples from people he happened to meet at the IKGA Lab, RSGM Baiturrahmah. Materials and tools used questionnaire sheets, stationery and computers

### **Data analysis**

Data were entered in Microsoft Excel 2010 software and analyzed. Descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean, and SD (standard deviation) were calculated for data presentation. Presentation of data in tabular form.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **Research result**

The importance of baby teeth according to the mother's perception shows that only 40% of mothers view primary teeth as very important and most 60% do not realize the importance of it. 30% of mothers have taken their children to the dentist and most (70%) self-medicate if they have toothache. With regard to parental awareness of the timing of the first visit to the dentist, none of the participants knew this was the most important primary dental health care for children (Table-1).

As many as 60% of mothers agree that dental problems are also as important as other health problems, the remaining 40% consider dental problems less important than other health problems. The results

also show that maternal awareness about the transmission of caries disease is inadequate. Most of them 76% have no knowledge about it. The questionnaire also provided information on lack of knowledge (80%) and awareness regarding fluoride as a protective factor (table-1). When asked about awareness about the differences between pediatric dentists and general dentists, 84% of parents were not aware of pediatric dentists (Table-1).

| No | Question   | Yes      | No        |
|----|--|----------|-----------|
| 1  | Do you realize the importance of babyteeth in your child's life?                 | 20 (40%) | 30 (60%)  |
| 2  | Have you ever taken your child to the dentist?                                   | 15 (30%) | 35 (70%)  |
| 3  | Do you know about your child's first dental visit at 6 months/minimum 12 months? | 0        | 50 (100%) |
| 4  | Are dental problems less important than other health problems?                   | 30 (60%) | 20 (40%)  |
| 5  | Did you know that caries is an infectious disease?                               | 12 (24%) | 38 (76%)  |
| 6  | Did you know fluoride prevents tooth decay?                                      | 10 (20%) | 40 (80%)  |
| 7  | Do you know the difference between a pediatric dentist and a general dentist?    | 8 (16%)  | 42 (84%)  |

**Table 1.** Respond to questions given to mother

| How often do you brush your teeth in a day? |          |            |
|---|----------|------------|
| One time                                    | Twice    | Not at all |
| 30 (60%)                                    | 10 (20%) | 10 (20%)   |

**Table 2.** Frequency of brushing teeth

Regarding the frequency of brushing teeth, most of the mothers 60% reported that only once they asked their children to brush their teeth, 20% for twice and not 20% at all (Table-2).

| Does a broken baby tooth affect a child's permanent teeth? |          |            |
|--|----------|------------|
| Yes  | No       | Don't know |
| 15 (30%)   | 10 (20%) | 25 (50%)   |

**Table 3.** Knowledge of milk teeth

| First point of contact when pain occurs? |                                      |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Give painkillers at home                 | Take the child to the family dentist | Take the child to the pediatric dentist (freq/percent) |
| 20(40%)                                  | 25 (50%)                             | 5 (10%)  |

**Table 4.** Place of first contact when pain occurs

Only 30% of mothers agreed that the decay of their primary teeth could affect their child's permanent teeth (Table-3). 55.2% of mothers visited a general dentist if their child had toothache (Table-4).

### Discussion

Providing preventive dental health care should start early in a child's life. Parents' beliefs and behaviors about their children's dental health differ between families due to cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Among the 50 mothers who were included in this study only 40% of mothers viewed primary teeth as very important and most 60% did not realize its importance. When asked 60% of mothers said that their primary teeth are temporary teeth and will be replaced by new teeth. The reason for the lack of knowledge about primary teeth may be due to culturally based beliefs or opinions. This reflects the increasing demand for starting dental awareness programs in the city.

In a study conducted by Schroth RJ et al, the authors found that parents who believed that primary teeth were important had children with significantly less decay. According to research results 40% of children have never visited a dentist until now. Similar results were detailed by Abduljalil HS and Abu Affan AH where (67.1%) children had never been to a dentist before. The reasons for the lack of visits can be due to concerns, high costs, accessibility. Studies conducted by Maulana et al and Chan et al show that the earlier a child visits the dentist, the more likely it is to be caries free [6].

In this study, for the frequency of brushing their teeth, 60% of mothers reported that only once a day before breakfast did they ask their children to brush their teeth. These mothers reported that because they themselves had been encouraged to brush their teeth at least once a day by their own parents, and therefore established a once- daily brushing routine. A similar study showed that 91.1% of mothers asked their children to brush their teeth once a day. Mother's own self-care behavior has a clear positive influence on children's tooth brushing behavior and dental health [7].

Nurhidayati (2012) the importance of the role of parents in maintaining the health of children's teeth and mouth is so that the child respondents are able and able to maintain good oral and dental health. Another factor that can affect the success of dental health in children is the use of a toothbrush. So far, children rarely pay attention to the toothbrush they use and how to brush their teeth properly. The role of parents is very necessary in order to provide a toothbrush that is appropriate for the child's age and demonstrate how to brush their teeth properly [8].

According to the AAPD, the first dental visit should take place at the time of eruption of the first primary teeth and no later than twelve months of age. The most worrying aspect of our study was that none of the participants knew about the child's first dental visit. The reason may be the result of inappropriate efforts made by dental professionals for positive reinforcement of primary teeth and their treatment. The results of this study differ from the findings of various studies, where the majority know the appropriate age for the first dental visit. The quality of children's dental and oral health in the future is reflected in the age of the child's first visit to the dentist.

Observations of this study indicate a lack of knowledge about the effect of caries on primary teeth on permanent teeth (60%), mothers tend to neglect treatment of primary teeth because they will be replaced. Our results are unlike other studies in which the majority of participants agreed that problems with primary teeth can affect children's permanent teeth[10].

Most mothers (60%) consider dental problems to be less important than other health problems and only 40% do not agree. Knowledge, attitudes and behavior of parents' dental and oral health can shape children's oral health behavior 6. Because caries is a contagious infectious disease, children of mothers with high levels of mutans streptococci, are at greater risk. A low level of awareness (76%) was observed among mothers about the fact that sharing equipment can spread S. mutans which can cause caries in children, Sakai et al also reported the same observation [6].

In this study, maternal knowledge of fluoride was found to be inadequate. Most mothers 80% do not know that fluoride is beneficial in preventing tooth decay, but only 20% agree that fluoride prevents tooth decay. The same disappointing results were reported in many studies. When mothers were asked what they do when their child gets sick, 55.2% of parents stated that they prefer a general dentist. 40% of mothers do self- medication by giving pain relievers at home. Only 4.8% stated that pediatric dentists were trained to assess the oral cavity of young childrenp[11].

On the question of knowledge about the difference between pediatric dentists and general dentists, only 16% knew, while the majority of 84% mothers did not know the difference. This shows a lack of knowledge about the value of a pediatric dentist and his duties are clear. The reason for the lack of

knowledge about pediatric dentists indicates a lack of public health awareness programs and thus in mothers. Therefore, it is necessary to develop an awareness program for parents, especially mothers to encourage them to seek preventive primary dental health care [6].

Oredugba F et al found inadequate knowledge of preventive oral health care in assessing mothers' oral health knowledge of their children. Without basic knowledge about caries risk factors, the importance of primary teeth and oral care, disease prevention measures are difficult. In an effort to promote oral health care in children there has been a significant reduction in the prevalence of dental caries in most industrialized countries. However, children from underprivileged families were found to have high levels of [6].

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research findings, it was concluded that most of the mothers who visited the IKGA Lab of RSGM Baiturrahmah still had less knowledge about the importance of primary teeth. Therefore, there is a need to implement more awareness programs in the city. Mothers need to be educated and trained about the importance of the first visit to the dentist and the value of a pediatric dentist to their children.

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