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Research Article

**A RESEARCH ON THE ASSESSMENT OF PARENT'S  
AWARENESS ON THE ORAL FITNESS OF THE CHILDREN**<sup>1</sup>Dr. Bisma Haseeb, <sup>1</sup>Dr. Hafiza Hamna Sadaqat, <sup>2</sup>Dr Sabeen Qureshi<sup>1</sup>DHQ Teaching Hospital Gujranwala<sup>3</sup>Women Medical Officer, THQ Hospital Sharaqpur**Abstract:****Objectives:** To assess assertiveness and information of parents towards their infant child's oral fitness.**Methods:** A total number of 150 parents of the infants (of the age 6 to 40 months) participated in this research study held at Allied Hospital, Faisalabad (October 2016 to March 2017). A questionnaire was prepared to gather the information from the parents about the oral health of their child.**Results:** The study revealed that a large number of parents stated, "child's general health depends upon his oral health". About 90.2% parents said toothpaste (fluoridated) stops tooth deterioration. About 40.4% parents said usage of the bottle should be permitted to the child if he is able to grip it. About 50.1% parent said, placing a child on the bed with a bottle in his hands for teething is safe for him. Parents with a good economic status (SES) stated that "daily feeding with milk had no harm to the teeth of the child". About 66% of parents possessing average status and 17% parents possessing high status, said that visiting a dentist should be only in the occurrence of the serious dental problem.**Conclusions:** Parents should be guided regarding the nutrition and initial oral check-up for their baby.**Keywords:** Assessment, Parent, Awareness, Oral Fitness, Children.**\* Corresponding author:****Dr. Bisma Haseeb,**  
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**INTRODUCTION:**

Infant's health and well-being are deeply linked with the Oral health, but unluckily at an initial age, many children face dental problems, even before age of one year [1]. Those affected teeth have a reduced quality of life [2]. Associated problems are also developed in the Children with early childhood caries, which includes teeth infections, pain which also establishes difficulty in normal eating and also effects development, and enlarged risk of problems like (caries) as a routine dentition [2, 3]. In infant age the major dentition is effected through dental caries which is to be treated through general anesthesia, which carries its own side effects breastfeeding for longer hours, bottle feeding at night times, birth order of the child, oral cleanliness habits, nutritional habits and reason behind initial dental visits are some of the causing elements which have been observed in early childhood caries [3 – 6]. Parents information about dental health and practices have deep impressions on their baby's oral health [7, 8]. Oral health of the children is linked with parents' appropriate oral health knowledge and habits parents' oral health practices and information has a specific influence on the health of the baby at the initial years of age we hardly find the research studies which have evaluated the information of parents related to the infant's dental health. The main objective of the study focused on assessing information, awareness and practices of parents towards the dental health of their baby [8 – 11].

**METHODS:**

Study held at Allied Hospital, Faisalabad (October, 2016 to March, 2017). Parents contributed in the research study by fulfilling the criteria which included; non-medical conditions in their offspring and the age of the baby should be ranging (16 to 40) months. A feedback form was prepared to collect biodata about parents' current information and behavioral response towards child's dental health.

Parents were given a well prepared questionnaire and they were free for arguing their opinions on the statements given in questionnaire. We use clues in the questionnaire such as child's general health depends much on baby's teeth; medical issues in baby's teeth have influence on his permanent teeth; children overall Health can get effected by Decayed teeth; soft drinks have no harmful effects on baby's teeth; babies must have cleaned their mouth even before teeth eruption; tooth decay can be reduced by using fluoridated tooth paste; nutritional plan for pre-natal will affect his teeth; for teething, baby should be provided with a bottle; baby's teeth have no harm due to frequent use of juice; commonly feeding with milk (or formula) have no damaging effects on baby's teeth; breast feeding for longer time has no harmful effects on baby's teeth; as baby is grown enough to grip a bottle, should be provided it on representing will; placing baby on bed with the habit of bottle in his mouth has no harm on teeth; providing feed through bottle after the age of one year is found harmful for baby's teeth; it is very important for the child to get Breast feed for his teeth; bottles are the only way to calm a weeping baby; visiting clinic at first birthday is very necessary and definite dental problem should be taken to a dentist.

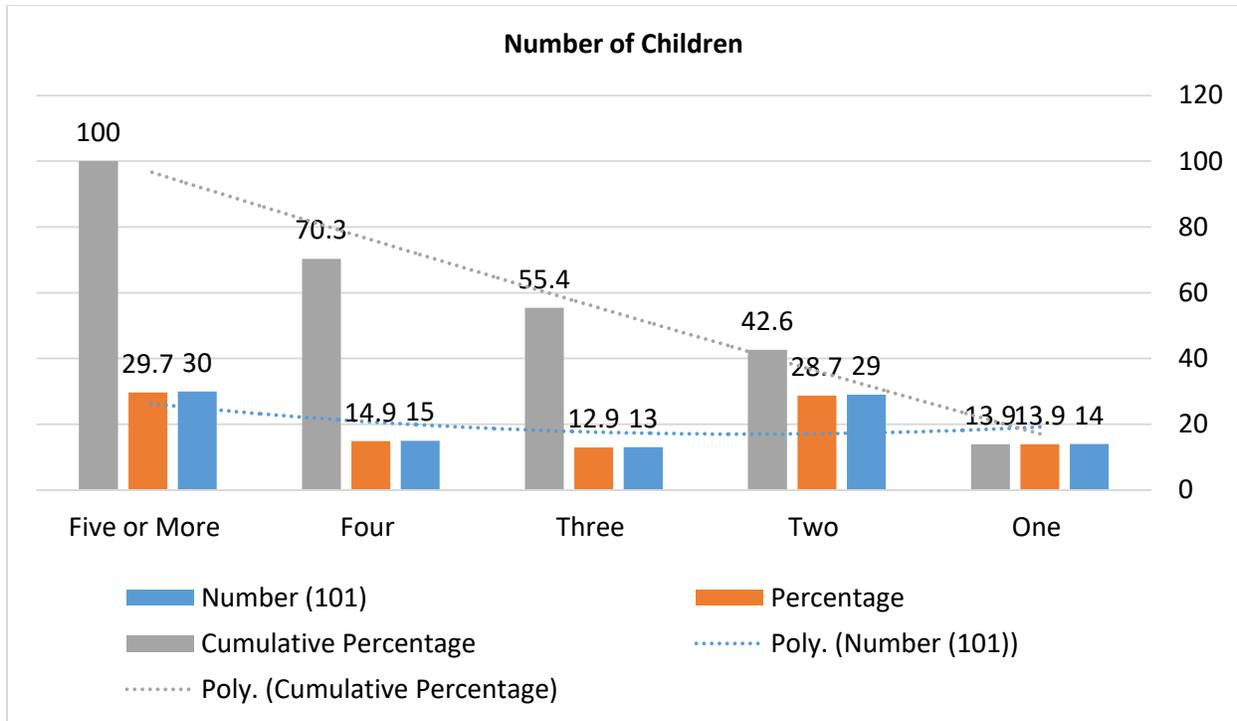
Ethical approval was taken from the ethical board of the hospital. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and written consent was also gotten. Participants were made sure for keeping their privacy unrevealed. Data entry was made using SPSS and frequency tables were generated.

**RESULTS:**

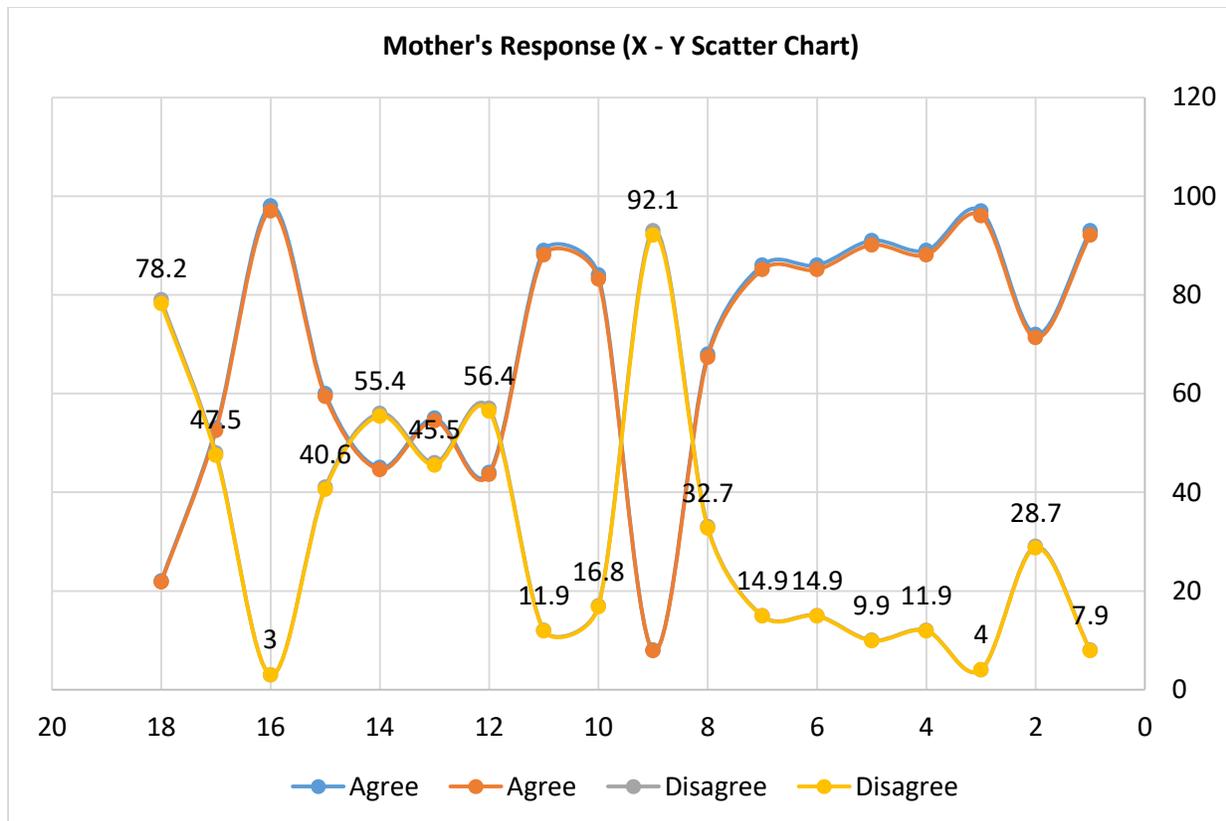
In the participants of study 150 parents were included in the children aged from 16 to 40 months. 38.% parents belonged to average socioeconomic status (SES) and (61%) from high (SES). Many of the parents had five or more children.

**Table-I: Children's number**

Children's Number	Number (101)	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
One	14	13.9	13.9
Two	29	28.7	42.6
Three	13	12.9	55.4
Four	15	14.9	70.3
Five or More	30	29.7	100

**Table-II: Response of the Mothers to the Oral health of their toddlers**

Statement	Agree		Disagree	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Importance of teeth in the health	93	92.1	8	7.9
Issues that affect permanent teeth	72	71.3	29	28.7
General health can be affected by decayed teeth	97	96	4	4
Mouth cleanliness is required before teeth eruption	89	88.1	12	11.9
Tooth decay can be prevented by using fluoridated toothpaste	91	90.1	10	9.9
Baby's teeth are affected through mother intake during pregnancy	86	85.1	15	14.9
Bottle comfort is good during teething	86	85.1	15	14.9
Soft drink has no harm if used often	68	67.3	33	32.7
Juice has no harm if used often	8	7.9	93	92.1
Formula milk has no harm if used often	84	83.2	17	16.8
All night breastfeeding has no harm if used often	89	88.1	12	11.9
Use of bottle at will	44	43.6	57	56.4
Use of bottle while going to bed has no harm	55	54.5	46	45.5
After one year bottle has harm	45	44.6	56	55.4
Importance of breastfeeding for oral health	60	59.4	41	40.6
Babies cry more in the absence of bottles	98	97	3	3
Children should visit the dentist before turning to one year of age	53	52.5	48	47.5
Children should visit the dentist when facing dental issues	22	21.8	79	78.2



In the clue “healthy teeth are important for baby health”, 92% of parents agreed and 28% of the parents disagreed on this clue. 90% of parents agreed that the baby must get his mouthwash before the teeth eruption. 90.% parents described that tooth decay can be reduced by Fluoridated toothpaste”. Only 15% parents on placing a child on the bed with the bottle in his mouth. About 33% of parents did not agree with the clue, “usual (soft) drinks have no harmful effects on baby’s teeth”. The same tendency was observed with consumption of milk, feed through breast for a longer time (12%). About 92% of the parents disagreed with the clue that “commonly drinking juices did not harm baby’s teeth”; 43.6% agreed that “when a baby is grown enough to grip a bottle easily, he should be provided with the bottle when representing willing”; 54.5% parents approved that “placing baby on bed having bottle in mouth did not harm baby’s teeth”. Moreover, only 44% of the parents stated, “feeding through bottle has harmful effects on teeth of baby”. About 52.5% of the parents approved that, by the first birthday, children should be taken to a dentist for a checkup”; and about 20% parents stated that “children must be taken to the dentist, only with a definite dental problem”. However, both clues showed apparent relation to (SES) of the parents. About 86% of parents belonging to high (SES) and 55% belonging to

average SES agreed on the clue that “feeding milk have no effects to child’s teeth”. About 66% of the middle (SES) parents and 17% of the higher (SES) parents approved, a child should only be brought to the dentist in a situation of a definite dental issue.

#### DISCUSSION:

Many parents got familiar with deciduous teeth value for the baby’s fitness, and that influence of dental problems to the health of the baby. In children, deciduous teeth dental carries may influence a baby’s growth, causing major infections and discomfort in the teeth [13]. Almost 25% of parents were unaware about the fact that the issues with (deciduous) teeth will influence permanent teeth. Caries in deciduous teeth can also have developed in the permanent teeth [14]. It is apparent that the links exist between two dentitions. 90% of parents agreed that babies should clean their mouths even before the outbreak of teeth. A recent research recommended oral cleanliness as early as possible, even at the eruption time of the initial teeth [13]. Cleaning of teeth just after eruption helps to reduce bacterial settlement. Little children must brush their teeth twice in a day. When the proximal contacts develop flossing should be initiated, as it is difficult to clean proximal tooth surfaces with a toothbrush [13]. many parents approved that fluoridated toothpaste has shown good

results in prevention for the tooth decay. This was interesting to know to keep reality in view, that fresh water does not contain the finest fluoride in many surrounding areas [15]. It is important for all infants to have optimal exposure to fluoride [13]. Fluoride usage helps to control caries. A (fluoridated) toothpaste is much effective in the treatment of the children having high risk, before the age of two years. Well managed and qualitative fluoride must be provided to the children having a high risk of caries. A few parents disagreed that provisioning of the bottle to baby for teething and using soft drinks have bad consequences on baby's health and they had similar ideas about milk and feeding through the breast. Inappropriate methods of feeding are significantly donating elements for carries in the initial years of childhood [5]. Milk, soft drinks and infant formula are common drinking liquids which contain fermentable carbohydrates. Acidic and sweetened drinks enhance the hazard of caries [16, 18]. Parents should be advised to use the mug for their baby up till the age of one year [19]. About 40% of parents stated that baby should be provided bottle at will for teething and about 50% parents also approved that placing the child at the bed with a bottle in his mouth has no harmful effects. Parents in Higher (SES) approved that continuous feeding with milk has no harmful effects to baby's teeth. Parents with higher (SES) were found in taking good precautions which can be credited to their good educational, social activities; Nocturnal baby-feeding was found harmful for the health of baby [18]. It is reported in the Studies in various places of the world that nighttime feeding, misappropriation of sugar is contributing elements towards the growth of intense initial childhood caries [20 – 22]. Parents must provide them a drinking cup up till the age of 12 to 14 months and stop it after this time period [19]. The AAPD supports the feeding through breast up to the age of one year. Still, it indicates that continuous feeding for a longer time by feeding through the bottle and in another case feeding through breast on demand can cause early childhood dental (caries) [13]. The (AAPD) not-recommends the placing of the baby on the bed with a bottle [13]. risk of early childhood caries is enhanced due to bottle feeding at night time containing juices, repeated use of a mug, sugar-containing, and acidic drinks. A study in Lahore have already stated sweetened milk and soft drinks are prone to caries in initial age [13, 16, 18]. Nutritional plan with excessive sugar are maintained in childhood [13]. A study suggested that children should be given under 4 to 6 ounces of (fruit) juice as per day from a mug, as part of the main meal [13]. Fifty percent parents approved that child must be visited by a dentist at the age of one year but

inappropriately twenty percent parents also approved that the child must visit clinic only when there is a vital need for visiting due to a severe problem. The average (SES) parents approved that the visit of the child must be made during severe dental issues. Which may be credited to overburden average (SES) parents to assign finances to related issues. It was observed in a research in 2007 that the average initial visit age was higher than the suggested age. The present suggestion for first dental visit range from initial teeth eruption to one year of age [19]. Improvement can be achieved by spreading the knowledge of healthy habit of feeding and oral condition of the hygiene. The (AAPD) suggest to start a dental home for infants at the age of 01 years [19]. which can Provide anticipatory guidance related to dental and oral growth. Belongings of intake to dental health is a vital consideration during first visit [13]. Our research study has gathered knowledge on dental health information and behavioral response of the parents. The correction in knowledge and behavioral response was needed in many important zones. This study will improve the coordination in the prevention of dental caries in infants.

#### CONCLUSIONS:

There should be guidance for the parents about the effects of (bottle) containing milk, drinks, sweet drinks, drinks (acidic), and juices on baby oral health. They should also be advised for an initial dental check-up visit by a dentist.

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