

**Research article**

# Parental Knowledge About Dental Health in Children

Laode Anhusadar<sup>1\*</sup> and Islamhiyah Islamhiyah<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>IAIN Kendari

<sup>2</sup>STIKES Mandala Waluya Kendari

**ORCID**

Laode Anhusadar: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4586-2379>

**Abstract.**

Parental knowledge is crucial in the development of behavior that promotes or discourages children's dental and oral hygiene. The goal of this research was to investigate how much knowledge parents had about their children's oral health. Interviews and questionnaires were used to gather information. The findings revealed that the majority of parents were unaware of their children's oral health. On the other hand, parents with sufficient knowledge did not always practice good oral hygiene, and parents with less knowledge did not always raise unhealthy children. While knowledge is one of the determinants of dental and oral hygiene in children, other factors such as parents' attitudes and awareness have an impact on the role of parents in maintaining their children's dental health.

**Keywords:** parental knowledge, dental health, early childhood

Corresponding Author: Laode Anhusadar; email: sadar.wanchines@gmail.com

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## 1. Introduction

Teeth are one unit with the rest of our body. Damage to the teeth can affect the health of other members of the body, so that it will interfere with daily activities. Tooth decay that occurs in children can be one of the causes of disruption of children's tooth growth at a later age [1].

Preventive dental care must begin early in infancy, during the first year of a child's life to ensure successful results [2]. Children's dental health is still the responsibility and attention of parents, meaning that children are still dependent on parents in maintaining and caring for their dental health [3].

Parental knowledge is very important in underlying the formation of behavior that supports or does not support children's dental and oral hygiene. Such knowledge can be obtained naturally or in a planned manner through the education process. Parents with low knowledge about dental and oral hygiene are predisposing factors of behavior that does not support children's dental and oral hygiene so as to increase the risk of dental caries in children [4].


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The problem of dental caries in early childhood carries a fairly dangerous impact that is teeth become porous, hollow, even broken so that the child loses chewing power and interfere with digestion [3]. In addition, dental caries can cause pain in the teeth so that it will interfere with absorption of food and affect the child's growth to the loss of playtime of children due to toothache [5]. The impact caused by dental caries experienced by children will also hamper children's development so that it will reduce the level of intelligence of children, which in the long run will have an impact on the quality of life of the community [3]. Improvement of dental and oral health must be started as early as possible, because toddlers and preschoolers are very important factors for further regulation of tooth growth. In addition, this also affects the child's ability to speak and his mastery [6].

Based on the results of Riskesdas in 2018 for oral health, it was found that the proportion of dental and oral health problems was 57.6% and those who received services from dental health personnel were 10.2% while the proportion of teeth brushing behavior was 2.8% correctly. .

Based on Southeast Sulawesi Regional Health Research the number of elementary school children who do dental and oral examinations in their schools is 81,397 while those who need care are 23,748 people and those who get care are 12,622 people or 53.15%. Based on Southeast Sulawesi Regional Health Research there are still 60-70% of Southeast Sulawesi people with dental and mouth problems.

Parental knowledge of children's dental health affects the attitudes and actions of parents in maintaining children's dental health and determining the child's dental health status. As parents need to teach children how to brush their teeth properly, when is the right time to brush their teeth, and routinely bring children to check the health status of their teeth.

Maintaining the health of children including oral health of children is one of the levels of development achievement of children aged 5-6 years. In the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation regarding the implementation of Early Childhood Education (PAUD), it is mentioned at several levels of achievement of children's development, namely maintaining personal hygiene and the environment and conducting personal hygiene activities.

This research was conducted with the aim of providing an overview of the parents' perspectives on dental and oral health of children that can improve health services for early childhood and improve early childhood education efforts in creating dental and oral health maintenance programs for early childhood.

## 2. Methodology

This research method is descriptive using descriptive survey method. Descriptive survey is a method in research conducted to describe or explain in detail a phenomenon that occurs in the community. The population in this study are parents who have children aged 3-6 years, totaling 55 people. While the sample used in this study is total sampling meaning that all samples are used as research samples.

Data collection techniques consisted of preparing an instrument used in a child's dental health examination and a questionnaire filled out by parents. To get data on parents' behaviors and concerns about children's dental health such as the habit of examining teeth to the doctor, the age of tooth brushing recognition, the frequency of children brushing their teeth in one day, the child's time when brushing their teeth, teaching how to brush their teeth correctly, parents' knowledge about teeth Caries is done through filling in the questionnaire by parents. This research was conducted with the aim to see how parents' knowledge of children's dental health.

## 3. Discussion

Based on the results of this study, there were 55 respondents of parents and toddlers. Respondents who have enough knowledge are 36 respondents (65.5%) and those with less knowledge are 19 (34.5) respondents.

Respondents with sufficient knowledge, there were 21 (38.2%) respondents of children under five having dental health conditions in the good category, while 15 (27.3%) respondents under five children having dental health conditions in the unfavorable category.

Respondents with sufficient knowledge and have children with good dental health because parents know how to care for their toddler's teeth and prevent their children from food that can cause cavities. While respondents with sufficient knowledge but have poor dental health due to inadequate because in addition to knowledge of attitude factors, parental initiative and food consumed by toddlers play an important role in the maintenance of toddler dental and oral health.

The results of this study are in accordance with research conducted by Rompis, et al on dental health of children, which states that education and knowledge do not guarantee the daily behavior of parents to care for the oral and dental health of their toddlers.

Respondents with less knowledge about dental health as many as 19 people (34.5%), who have children with good dental health conditions as many as 4 (7.2%), this is because the age of children under five years old who have not consumed many sweet foods and so on so that the toddler's dental health condition is quite good. This can be concluded at the time the researchers conducted the research asked directly to parents whether their children often consume sweet foods such as sweets or not and the answer is no because they do not want to get used to eating snacks.

While those who lack knowledge and children with good dental health conditions are 15 (27.7%). This lack of knowledge is partly combined with behaviors and beliefs that lead to poor feeding practices, poor maintenance of oral hygiene, and failure to seek professional dental care seem to place certain children at a higher risk of caries than other children with more care [5].

The success of dental and oral hygiene can be achieved one of them is through the ability to maintain good oral hygiene that is influenced by knowledge. A child needs to be equipped with good knowledge about how to care for and maintain the dental health of parents so that they can clean their teeth to avoid dental disease [3].

A number of factors associated with children, mothers or dentists can cause poor collaboration during dental care. Determining children's oral health is strongly influenced by their mothers; as the primary caregiver.

Many factors influence the attention of parents on children's health. Some other parental factors might include the mother's level of education, occupation, age, current knowledge, attitudes, and behavior towards health. These factors determine the decision a mother makes about her child's health [5].

## 4. Conclusion

Parental knowledge of children's dental health affects the attitudes and behavior of parents in maintaining children's dental health. Parents who have a good perspective on the dental health of children is directly proportional to the dental health of children. Examination of dental health in children and providing parents with information about how to maintain the dental health of children needs to be improved in order to better dental health of children in Indonesia

Teeth are one unit with the rest of our body. Damage to the teeth can affect the health of other members of the body, so that it will interfere with daily activities. Dental health of children is be the responsibility and attention of parents, meaning that children are still dependent on parents in maintaining and caring for their dental health. Parental

knowledge is very important in underlying the formation of behavior that supports or does not support children's dental and oral hygiene. Dental caries can cause pain in the teeth so that it will interfere with the absorption of food and affect the growth of the child to the loss of playing time of the child due to toothache

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