Original Article

Evaluation of knowledge of dental developmental stage of 4-9 years old children among parents

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Abstract

Background and purpose: Parental knowledge about child's dental developmental stage affects their performance greatly in providing domestic hygienic care, professional preventive care and meeting child's needs for treatment. The aim of this study was to evaluate of knowledge of dental developmental stage of 4-9 years old children among parents in Mashhad, Iran.

Method: Two hundred eighteen parents (with one child) participated in this cross sectional study, filling questionnaires and answering clinical questions about their child's dental developmental stage. The results were analyzed using SPSS software, using spearman and Pearson correlation, means and percentiles.

Results: Around 80% of parents correctly named the dental system type of their children. Considering the question about the need for a primary tooth exfoliation before eruption of each permanent tooth, only 45% of parents gave the right answer. Variance analysis declared that there was significant relationship between knowing about type of dental system and child's age (p= 0.02). There was also significant relationship between parental knowledge about the need for a primary tooth exfoliation before eruption of each permanent tooth and family income (p= 0.022). Parents could not correctly recognize the type of tooth (primary or permanent) for 11.01% of teeth. The most miss recognized teeth was related to lower first permanent molar (37.5 %). There was significant relationship and positive correlation between child's age and miss recognizing the tooth type by parents (P= 0.06). There was also a significant relationship between parental academic education and miss recognizing the tooth type by parents (P= 0.042).

Conclusions: A significant percentage of parents had inadequate knowledge about type of dental system and type of each tooth (primary or permanent). More effort should be put on educating parents by dentists and authorities.

Key words: Dental system, primary teeth, permanent teeth.