



**“ASSOCIATION BETWEEN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARIES AND
BEHAVIOUR IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN AS MEASURED BY THE
CHILD BEHAVIOUR CHECKLIST.”**

By

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Dissertation submitted to the
Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Karnataka, Bangalore.

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

t-1172

MASTER OF DENTAL SURGERY (M.D.S)

in

PEDIATRIC AND PREVENTIVE DENTISTRY

Under the guidance of

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April 2017



ABSTRACT

Background:

Early childhood caries (ECC) is a devastating disease with a multifactorial origin. It is a pediatric and a public health problem. Early childhood caries is shown to have an impact on the quality of life and the general well-being of the child. It also leads to pain, speech problems, feeding difficulties, sleep problems, loss of school days, and psychological behaviour changes in the child. However, very little is known about the changes in behaviour of the child and early childhood caries. Hence, by using a standardised assessment tool an association between early childhood caries and behaviour changes in preschool children could be predicted.

Aim:

This study was undertaken to find out an association between early childhood caries and behaviour changes in preschool children using a standardised assessment tool.

Materials and Methods:

The study group included 120 healthy preschool children aged 18-60 months of which 60 caries free preschool children and 60 caries active preschool children were considered. Each child was inspected for dental decay showing clinical features of Early Childhood Caries. The parent or the caregiver was asked to respond to the Child Behavior Checklist (CBC) containing 100 questions regarding the child's daily behavior by circling either 0(not true), 1(somewhat or sometimes true), or 2(very true or often true) for each question. The total scores, the narrow-band subscales (Withdrawn, Somatic Problems, Anxious or Depressed, Social Problems, Attention

Problems, Emotionally reactive, Sleep problems, internalizing problems, externalizing problems, attention deficit hyperactivity problem, oppositional defiant problems) and raw scores were obtained. Accordingly for each raw score, T scores were obtained using graphic display. These scores were then subjected to statistical analysis such as Kolmogorov Smirnov test, Mann-Whitney U test, Spearman's rank correlation method.

Results:

Results of the present study showed no significant statistical differences in behavior based on demographics of gender, age, or race. However, significant differences were noted in the behaviour of caries free children and caries active children. It was seen that in the present study, group II (CA) had more behavioural problems as compared to group I (CF) which included emotionally reactive, anxious/ depressed, somatic problems, withdrawn, sleep problems, attention problems, aggressive behaviour, internalizing problems, externalizing problems, total problems, depressive problems, anxiety problems, autism spectrum problems, attention deficit/ hyperactivity problems and oppositional defiant problems.

Conclusion:

The study showed significant differences in the behaviour of caries free children and caries active children. It was seen that caries active children had more behavioural problems as compared to caries free children.

Keywords: caries free children; caries active children; child behavior checklist (CBC); behavior.