

Oral Hygiene Practices, Beliefs and Knowledge Towards Dental Care

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: oral health care includes those practices which are undertaken to improve and maintain good oral health. The KAP method i.e. knowledge, attitude and practice is one of the most commonly used method which serves as a foundation of oral health education. Study aimed to assess the knowledge, beliefs, and oral health care practices among adults towards dental care.

Material and Methods: Self-reported questionnaires on self care practice were distributed among the participants. The samples were selected using stratified random sampling method. Study population consisted of 300 participants aged above 15 years. Prevalence of caries among participants was also recorded.

Results: The caries prevalence rate in present study was 72%. Out of 300 samples 60% said yes they use toothbrush and toothpaste where as 35% said they use finger. 33.3% said they don't brush at all. Brushing once a day was more common.

Conclusion: awareness of oral health was found moderate in present study. Lack of knowledge regarding dental visit was noticed among people, which can be improved by regular community based programme.

Keywords: Oral Health, Caries, Knowledge, Attitude

INTRODUCTION

Health is not only defined as absence of disease instead it is also extends to physically, mentally and socially well being¹. Oral health care hold s an equal important position in maintenance of good health. Lack of proper oral health care can result into various diseases. Majority of oral diseases are related to changed lifestyle, which implies on the fact that a behavioral change is needed to reduce diseases. Such changes require a proper channel, guidance and motivation. According to the World Health Organization, dental caries is a major oral health issue affecting 90% of school going children in many countries.²

Behavior plays a very important role in role health. According to the evidence available increasing oral health problems has been encountered in developing countries where community-oriented preventive programs have not been implemented.^{3,4} Some studies have shown a strong association between increased knowledge and better oral health.^{5,6} Proper knowledge and a good behavior can act as a role model for individuals. So we aimed to assess the knowledge, beliefs, and oral health care practices among adults towards dental care and dental caries prevalence.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A cross sectional study was conducted in Ratlam. A total of 300 participants aged above 15 years both males and

females were selected for the study. Ethical clearance and prior informed consent was obtained from school authorities and regional education officer. Written informed consent was obtained from participants. Those with chronic systemic disease and mental disorder were excluded from the study. The sample consisted of 300 participants out of 300, 150 were males and 150 females. Based on W.H.O, caries prevalence was determined using the decayed, missing, and filled teeth (DMFT) index, all examinations being done by a single trained examiner.⁷

Bilingual questionnaire consisting of 10 questions were selected. The questionnaire were based on oral health care such oral hygiene maintenance, knowledge of oral health care and attitude toward oral health as well as sources of information on oral health. The validation of the questionnaire was done. The language opted were both Hindi and English. Questionnaire was distributed among participants and importance of answering was explained.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Questionnaire was collected and data was obtained. Data were entered using SPSS package descriptive data were obtained. Chi-square test was used in statistical evaluation of bivariate frequency distributions.

RESULTS

A total of 300 participants were included in the study. Questionnaire containing 10 questions were equally distributed among participants. There were 7 questions based on knowledge of oral health in regards to dental caries, bleeding gums, dental plaque etc with three options: yes, no and don't know (table 1). When asked about the method of cleaning used, 180/300 i.e. 60% samples said the use toothbrush, 105/300 i.e. 35% reported using finger to clean their teeth, 36/300 i.e.12% used dental floss, 65/300 i.e. 21.6% used mouthwash, 118/300 i.e. 39.3% used toothpick and 50/300 i.e. 16.6% said they didn't use anything (table 2). Of the 300 samples 120 said they brush once daily i.e. 40%, 45/300 brushed twice a day i.e. 15%, 25/300 said they brush once a week i.e. 8.3% where as 100/300 i.e. 33.3% they never brushed (table 3). When asked regarding the time duration of brushing 140/300 i.e. 46.3% said they brush for 2 minutes,

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How to cite this article: Manan Vyas, Seema Vyas. Oral hygiene practices, Beliefs and Knowledge towards Dental Care. International Journal of Contemporary Medical Research 2018;5(2):B11-B13.

	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Do not Know	Percentage	Total Number
Aware about dental plaque?	55	18.3%	142	47.3%	103	34.3%	300
Do you know about dental caries?	236	78.6%	42	14%	22	7.3%	300
Know or heard about gingivitis?	75	25%	140	46.6%	85	28.3%	300
Tooth brushing helps in cleaning teeth	200	66.6%	44	14.6%	56	18.6%	300
Does Tooth brushing prevent bleeding from gums?	78	26%	110	36.6%	112	37.3%	300
Does Dental floss helps to maintain oral hygiene?	28	9.3%	107	35.6%	165	55%	300
Do you Regularly visit dentists?	155	51.6%	66	22%	79	26.3%	300

Table-1: Total number of school children on knowledge about Dental diseases and prevention

	Yes	Total Number	Percentage
Toothbrush	180	300	60%
Finger	105	300	35%
Dental Floss	36	300	12%
Mouthwash	65	300	21.6%
Toothpick	118	300	39.3%
Do not use anything	50	300	16.6%

Table-2: Total number and percentage of participants on different methods of cleaning teeth

	Yes	Total Number	Percentage
Once a day	120	300	40%
Twice a day	45	300	15%
Once a week	25	300	8.3%
No brushing	100	300	33.3%

Table-3: Frequency of tooth brushing

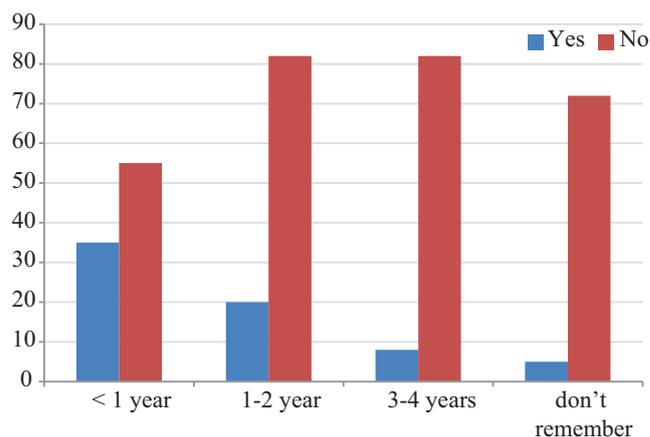
Time	Yes	Total number	Percentage
2min	140	300	46.3%
<2min	110	300	36.6%
>2min	150	300	50%

Table-4: Time spent on brushing

	Yes	Total Number	Percentage
No benefits of brushing	12	300	4%
No one brushes in family	5	300	1.6%
Always forget to brush my teeth	25	300	8.3%
Too lazy to brush	4	300	1.3%
Gums are bleeding when brushing	18	300	6%
No time to brush	11	300	3.6%
No particular reason	26	300	8.6%

Table-5: Brushing frequency

110/300 i.e. 36.6% brushed for less than 2 minutes and 150/300 i.e. 50% brushed for more than 2 minutes (table 4). 35/300 said they visit dentist yearly. 20/300 prefer visiting once in 1-2 years whereas 72/300 they don't visit dentist at all (graph 1). The most common reason for not brushing was found to be no specific reason by 26/300 i.e. 8.6% samples. 25/300 people said they forget to brush (8.3%), 6% said they don't prefer to brush because it causes gums to bleed and



Graph-1: Frequency of dental visit

1.6% people said no one brushes in the family (table 5).

DISCUSSION

Knowledge, attitude and beliefs of an individual towards oral health care have a huge impact in the prevention of dental diseases. Studies on oral health care on child population has been conducted by many authors however limited reports are present on knowledge and beliefs in regards to oral health care in adult population. This study evaluated the knowledge, attitude, and practice of oral health among adults. In present study a total of 300 individuals were selected both males and females. Of the 300 samples selected a large number of people i.e. 210/300 (70%) were found affected by caries. E.S takes et al in their study determined adolescent's beliefs and attitudes in relation to oral health and found that most participants had a good knowledge of the etiology and prevention of oral disease and were aware of many different professionally applied dental treatments. However knowledge based on etiology was not recorded in our study.⁸ In present study 78.6% people said they are aware about dental caries and 55% were aware about plaque. It was observed that more number of people was aware about caries than dental plaque. Our results were higher than those reported by Al Subait A et in their study 43.3% people were aware of plaque.⁹ 66.6% said they think brushing help to keep teeth clean. However only 9.3% people said they are aware about dental floss. Dental floss was not very common among people in current study.

Mahmoud AI Omar, in the year 2005 conducted a similar study and found that 70% of the study population was aware

that gingival bleeding reflects gingivitis. Only 13% of the study population knew that there was a link between dental plaque and gingivitis.¹⁰ In present study 25% population was aware about gingivitis which is very low as compared to results found by Mahmoud AI Omar. 60% of the population used toothbrush and toothpaste to lean their teeth whereas 35% still preferred finger instead of toothbrush. 39.3% samples used toothpick regularly. 66.6% said the reason for brushing was it helps to keep teeth clean. 26% said it helps to prevent bleeding gums. Al Subait in his study reported that majority of people said brushing their teeth is to have white and shiny teeth, to get rid of bad breath and to have healthy teeth.⁹ another study reported elimination of bad breathe as the reason of brushing.¹¹ Chi et al in his study suggested that low economic status, less educated parents and lack of knowledge lead to negative behaviors towards oral health care.¹² however we don't relate to such findings in our study. 40% individuals said they brushed once daily, very few people brushed twice daily. Ling Zhu reported that 32% of the 35–44-year-olds and 23% of the 65–74-year-olds brushed at least twice a day which was similar to our results.¹³ 8.3% people said they forget to brush whereas 4% said there are no benefits of brushing. The reasons given for not brushing clearly implies on the fact that there is lack of knowledge and awareness among people. The prevalence rate of dental caries among adults in present study the prevalence rate was 72% which was high. Increasing survey, motivational campaign can help to increase individual's knowledge on oral health.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of our study large number of people were aware of oral health care. However use of dental floss, mouthwash was found less common. Very few people visited dentist regularly. Community based oral health program can help to increase awareness among people. Importance of oral health care should be thought as soon as one begins schooling.

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Source of Support: Nil; **Conflict of Interest:** None

Submitted: 06-02-2018; **Accepted:** 04-03-2018; **Published:** 13-03-2018