



CODEN [USA]: IAJ PBB

ISSN: 2349-7750

INDO AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES

<http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2633197>
Available online at: <http://www.iajps.com>

Research Article

ASSESSMENT OF AWARENESS OF ORAL HEALTH AMONG THE PUBLIC

Nehad J. Ahmed¹, Faisal Z. Alkhawaja²

¹ Department of Clinical Pharmacy, College of Pharmacy, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj · Saudi Arabia, ² College of Pharmacy, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj · Saudi Arabia.

Article Received: February 2019

Accepted: March 2019

Published: April 2019

Abstract:

Background: Oral health has long been considered to be an essential part of overall, general health. Knowledge of oral health is considered to be an important requirement for health-related behavior

Objective: The aim of this study is to assess the knowledge and perception of the public regarding oral health and to illustrate their oral health practices

Methodology: cross-sectional questionnaire-based survey was converted to online survey using google drive to evaluate the knowledge of the public regarding their oral health.

Results and Discussion: The majority of the respondents agree that it is necessary to have a good oral health. The adherence to oral health practices was generally good, but their knowledge regarding oral health was insufficient, similar results were obtained in other studies

Conclusion: The public had a good adherence to the oral health practices. they have low knowledge regarding the best way for teeth brushing and the diseases that affect oral health. Oral health education and patient counseling should be strengthened to get a good oral health

Keyword: Awareness, Oral health, Public.

Corresponding author:**Nehad J. Ahmed,**

Department of Clinical Pharmacy, College of Pharmacy,
Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj, Saudi Arabia.
n.ahmed@psau.edu.sa, 00966543707806.

QR code



Please cite this article in press Nehad J. Ahmed et al., *Assessment Of Awareness Of Oral Health Among The Public.*, Indo Am. J. P. Sci, 2019; 06(04).

INTRODUCTION:

Health is an important human need for all people. General health cannot be preserved without good oral health. The mouth is considered as the entrance to our body and acts as a mirror that reflects the status of our health.[1]

Oral health has long been considered to be an essential part of overall, general health. But oral disease still continues to be one of the most dominant problems affecting the overall wellbeing of the world's population.[2] Prevention and general maintenance are principal and effective methods to warrant oral health in addition to patients' practice of oral hygiene techniques.[3] Factors that influenced the effectiveness and appropriateness of the patients' oral hygiene maintenance included their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior regarding oral disease prevention. Knowledge of oral health is considered to be an important requirement for health-related behavior.[4]

Healthcare professionals' perceptions and practice of oral health maintenance are typically developed during official education. Evaluating these forms of oral health attitudes and behavior among healthcare professional students and among the public are of particular significance because the development of their own insights and practices of oral health maintenance have a direct effect on their capability to influence their patients' perceptions and practice of oral health maintenance.[5,6] The aim of this study is to assess the knowledge and perception of the public regarding oral health and to illustrate their oral health practices.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The cross-sectional questionnaire-based survey used in previous studies [7,8,9] was converted to online survey using google drive to evaluate the knowledge of public regarding their oral health. The questionnaire contains closed-ended questions and consists of main parts, first part includes demographic information such as gender, country, age and social status. The second part consisted of questions related to the knowledge (specially the techniques of brushing teeth and oral diseases), perception (questions answered by agree or disagree) and adherence to oral hygiene practices (contains 3 questions regarding oral health practices). Google drive and Excel software were used to collect the information, analyze the data and to prepare the tables.

RESULTS:

The majority of the respondents were male (84.5%), 89.7 % of the respondents were from Saudi Arabia. Only 7.7 % of the participants are married. The Age of the respondents were mainly in the range of 19 – 24 Years old (71.9%), the age of 32.2% of the respondents is 22 years. The majority of the respondents agree that it is necessary to have a good oral health. Table 1 shows the public perception regarding oral health.

The knowledge of the public regarding oral health was insufficient. For example, only 27.10% of the participants know the different techniques for brushing teeth. Table 2 shows the knowledge of the public regarding Oral health. The adherence to oral health practices were generally good. About 90.30% of the participants washed their teeth at least 1 time daily. Table 3 shows the adherence to oral health practices.

Table 1. The public perception regarding Oral health	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
Do you agree it is necessary to brush in the morning and at night to keep the teeth healthy?	47.10%	37.40%	15.50%
Do you agree it is necessary to washing the mouth with water after every meal to remove the food debris?	42.90%	41.00%	16.10%
Do you agree using fluoride toothpaste strengthens the teeth?	37.10%	40.60%	22.30%
Do you agree it is necessary to have a dental checkup at least once a year?	39.00%	44.80%	16.10%

Table 2. The knowledge of the public regarding Oral health	Yes	No
Do you know what is stomatitis?	31.00%	69.00%
Do you know what is Oral thrush?	31.60%	68.40%
Do you know what is Halitosis?	20.30%	79.70%
Do you know the different techniques for brushing teeth?	27.10%	72.90%
Do you know that teeth grinding can expose the dentin?	27.70%	72.30%

Table 3. The adherence to oral health practices

Variables	N (%)
How often do you go for dental checkups?	
2 times a year	51(16.5 %)
Once a year	64(20.7 %)
Only when necessary	170(54.7 %)
Not at all	25(8.1%)
How often do you use fluoride toothpaste to brush your teeth in a week?	
2 to 3 days	50 (16.1 %)
Less than 2 days	133 (42.9 %)
Not at all	84 (27.1 %)
Every day	43 (13.9 %)
How often do you wash your teeth in a day?	
3 times	87 (28.1 %)
2 times	121(39.0 %)
1 times	72(23.2 %)
Not at all	30(9.7 %)

DISCUSSION:

Oral health is an important part of general health. Different studies reported the lack of public knowledge regarding oral health. This study was focusing on the oral health and has shown how much oral health knowledge the public have. First part questions showed that the majority of respondents were male, Saudis, single and within the age range between 19-24.

The second part about the public perception regarding Oral health showed that the majority agree that the oral health is an important necessity and that it is important to brush teeth continuously to keep the teeth healthy and also agree that it is important to wash the mouth after every meal in addition to having annually dental checkup. This is similar to the result of study conducted by Virginia J. Dodd [10].

The Third part contains information about the knowledge of the public regarding oral health and showed that the public had a lack of knowledge regarding the best to make teeth brushing and about the problems that can result as a result of poor oral health, more than 68 % have a lack in their knowledge about oral health. Similar results were obtained in other studies [11,12,13]

The fourth part include information about the adherence to oral health practices and showed that the majority wash their teeth continuously and make dental checkup annually and only 27.1 % don't use fluoride toothpaste to brush their teeth, this finding is in agreement with that of a study conducted by Abeer

Al Subait et al [14]

CONCLUSION:

The public had a good adherence to the oral health practices and poor knowledge regarding the best way to make teeth brushing and about the problems that can result as a result of poor oral health. Oral health education and patient counseling should be strengthened to get a good oral health. In addition to that continuous education course should be given to dentists to keep their information updated. The good knowledge, perceptions and adherence to good oral health practices are very important to get effective prevention of dental diseases.

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