

Original Article

RANDOMISED CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY OF ORAL HEALTH RELATED KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIOUR AMONG PARAMEDICAL STUDENTS

Shwethashri R Permi¹, Rahul Bhandary² & Biju Thomas³¹Post Graduate, ²Professor, ³Professor &Head, Department of Periodontics, A.B. Shetty Memorial Institute of Dental Sciences, Nitte University, Deralakatte, Mangalore, Karnataka, India

Correspondence :

Shwethashri R Permi

Post Graduate, Department of Periodontics, A.B. Shetty Memorial Institute of Dental Sciences, Nitte University, Deralakatte, Mangalore - 575 108, Karnataka, India.

E-mail : harish.shwethashri@gmail.com

Abstract :

The aim of the study is to estimate the knowledge, attitude and behaviour regarding oral health among para medical students

Materials and method : A cross sectional questionnaire survey was conducted among 150 para medical professionals in Mangalore. The health care professionals include from physiotherapy, nursing and medical lab technicians. They were asked to answer a questionnaire that contained 15 questions regarding knowledge and behaviour towards oral health.

Results and conclusion : Majority of para medical students were practising a convincing oral hygiene methods they believed oral health play a role in general health had a positive attitude in educating their patients when required.

Keywords : Paramedical students, questionnaire, oral health

Introduction :

Oral health is an important part of general health of body. Oral hygiene determines oral health status, thus its most important for good health in general, poor oral hygiene can be source of many disease .maintaining good oral hygiene practices we can prevent occurrence of dental caries , periodontal diseases etc, unfortunately oral hygiene practices are less emphasised in society^(1,2,3) . Studies have shown that there is an association between increased knowledge and better oral health^(4,5) .Those who have assimilated the knowledge and feel a sense of personal control over their oral health are more likely to adopt self care practices⁽⁶⁾ .

By virtue of their professional role, para medical personal play a vital role in health promotion and preventive information dissemination in community level. It is therefore important that

their own oral knowledge is good and their oral health behaviour conforms to expectation of the population .The purpose of this study is to investigate oral health knowledge and behaviour among para medical students.

Objective: The aim of the study was to estimate the knowledge and behaviour regarding oral health among para medical students.

Methodology :

A cross sectional questionnaire survey was conducted among 150 para medical students in Mangalore. The para medical health care students include from physiotherapy, Nursing and medical lab technicians. They were asked to answer a questionnaire that contained 15 questions regarding knowledge and behaviour towards oral health.

Ethical clearance was obtained from institutional ethical board of AB Shetty Memorial institute of dental science, Mangalore and written informed consent was taken from all the subjects prior for participation.

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Statistical analysis :

The data collected was analysed using statistical package for social sciences spss11.5version.the descriptive statistics like frequency distribution was calculated.

Results :

Table 1 reveals that 32%of the respondents brush their teeth once daily and 64.7% brush twice a day, 3.3%brush more than twice. None of the respondents used charcoal or neem, toothpowder etc 82.7% used toothpaste and brush, 17.3 % used toothpaste, brush, floss .4% of them used hard toothbrush where as 68.7 %used medium bristle brush, 22% of them used soft brush, 5.3% didn't know the type of brush they used.4% of the respondents practised horizontal brushing technique19% used circular method, 7.3% used vertical and majority of them practised combination of all.75.3%were not aware of inter dental aids. This reveals the knowledge regarding oral hygiene measures.

Table 2 shows awareness about gingival health 36.7% noticed bleeding gums. 32% complained of smell from mouth, 42% of the respondents were not aware of dental calculus.

Table 3 shows attitude towards professional dental care towards visiting dentist for

Table 1: Oral hygiene habits among Para medical students professional care 56% believed to visit dentist but 75.3% visited only when in pain , 71.3%

| Brushing frequency | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Once daily | 48 | 32 |
| Twice daily | 97 | 64.7 |
| More than twice | 5 | 3.3 |
| Oral hygiene materials used by paramedical professionals | | |
| Materials used | Frequency | Percentage |
| Toothpaste and brush | 124 | 82.7 |
| Toothpaste and brush and floss | 26 | 17.3 |
| Type of brush used | | |
| Type | Frequency | Percentage |
| Hard | 6 | 4 |
| Soft | 33 | 22 |
| Medium | 103 | 68.7 |
| Don't know | 8 | 5.3 |

| Brushing frequency | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Brushing technique used | | |
| Technique | Frequency | Percentage |
| Horizontal | 6 | 4 |
| Circular | 29 | 19.3 |
| Vertical | 11 | 7.3 |
| Combined | 104 | 69.3 |
| Awareness about interdental aids | | |
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 37 | 24.7 |
| No | 113 | 75.3 |

were not aware who periodontist are ,48% of respondent never got oral prophylaxis done 62.7%were completely unaware of any cosmetic gum treatment available .

Table 4 reveals that 91.3 %believed that oral health effects general health and 84% believed in educating their patients whenever required 50.7% obtained all knowledge regarding oral health issues from schools and colleges.

Table 2: Awareness of oral health

| Ever noticed bleeding gums | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 55 | 36.7 |
| No | 95 | 63.3 |
| Noticed smell from mouth | | |
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 48 | 32 |
| No | 102 | 68 |
| Do you know what dental calculus is | | |
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 85 | 56.7 |
| No | 63 | 42.0 |
| I have heard about it | 2 | 1.3 |

Table 3 : Awareness towards professional oral care among para medical students

| Do you visit dentist | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 84 | 56 |
| No | 66 | 44 |
| how often do you visit dentist | | |
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Every 6 months | 16 | 10.7 |
| Once a year | 21 | 14 |
| When i have pain | 113 | 75.3 |
| do you know who is periodontist are | | |
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 43 | 28.7 |
| No | 107 | 71.3 |

| have you got oral prophylaxis done | | |
|---|-----------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 78 | 52 |
| No | 72 | 48 |
| are you aware of cosmetic gum treatment | | |
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 56 | 33.7 |
| No | 94 | 62.7 |

Table 4 : Awareness regarding importance of oral health education

| Do you think oral health effect general health | | |
|--|-----------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 137 | 91.3 |
| No | 13 | 8.7 |
| Do you educate patients regarding oral health if required | | |
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Yes | 126 | 84 |
| No | 24 | 16 |
| From where do you obtain your information on oral hygiene practice | | |
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| From doctor/dentist | 35 | 23.3 |
| From mass media | 39 | 26 |
| From school/college | 76 | 50.7 |

Discussion :

Oral diseases are considered a globally as public health issue due to high prevalence in society due to lack of education and skills. Role of para medical students as they are expected that they have good knowledge than

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community apart which can be imparted during their practise for betterment of their patients.

Oral hygiene is a prime key to healthy mouth .This study population had good knowledge and awareness of oral hygiene practises, materials and usage of same, issues regarding bleeding gums, 32% of them complained of smell from oral cavity. They had a positive attitude in seeking dental professional help, in contrast majority of them visited dentist only in pain. The results of present study are similar to study conducted by laxman singh ⁽⁷⁾. 91.3% respondents understand that there exist a link between oral and systemic health and they acquired this knowledge through school and colleges, mass media. The oral health education and motivation if emphasised in their study period, this knowledge can be imparted to their patients in near future for better health.

Conclusion :

This study showed an overview of oral health related knowledge attitude and practise behaviour among paramedical students .the knowledge and attitude towards oral health is good, but can be emphasised more through education as para medical students play a vital role in health education promotion and prevention in community level.