

## Oral Hygiene Knowledge and Practice among Students of Government Girls Unity College Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria

MOHAMMED ABBA ALKALI

P.H.D Research Scholar in Public Health

Department of Public Health and Community Medicine

NIMS University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

### Abstract

*Oral hygiene is the procedure for preservation of health of the oral cavity, personal maintenance of cleanliness and other measures recommended by dental professional (Esther 1999). Oral health is a key indicator of overall health and its link with general health is systemic and reciprocal, when oral health is compromised by diseases or injury, general health suffers (WHO 2016). Data was collected by administering structured questionnaire to 280 students. Simple random sampling was used to select participants. Descriptive research was used to report the information as they exist. The objective of this study was to assess the knowledge and practice of oral hygiene among secondary school students in Damaturu, Yobe state, Nigeria. The study found that all the students 280(100%) were using brush and toothpaste in cleaning their teeth. The result also shows that 258(92%) of the students don't know fluoridated tooth paste and it's important. However, only 24(8.6%) of the students were reported to be using fluoridated toothpaste. 220(78.5%) were reported to had never visited a dentist. However, out of the 60(21.5%) students which were reported to have visited a dentist, 54(90%) of them visited the dentist because of tooth/mouth/gum pain. The study revealed that knowledge and practice related to cleaning teeth is good, even though majority of them brush their teeth only once daily which is below the recommended standard. There is need for oral health enlightenment and campaign with regards to best oral hygiene practices among students.*

**Key words:** Oral health, hygiene, knowledge, practice, student, college.

## **INTRODUCTION**

World health organization defines oral health as a state of being free from chronic mouth and facial pain, oral and throat cancer, oral sores, birth defects such as Cleft lip and palate, periodontal (gum) diseases, tooth decay and tooth loss, and other diseases and disorders that affects the oral cavity WHO/AFRICA( 2016).

Oral health is a key indicator of overall health and its link with general health is systemic and reciprocal. The mouth is the body's main portal for nutrition and may also provide access for bacteria, virus, fungi and other vectors of diseases, it is the starting point of body's defense system and immunity. When oral health is compromised by diseases or injury, general health suffers WHO (2016). According to research carried out by Johnson (2014) on oral health knowledge, attitude, and practice among secondary school students in Nigeria revealed that the students expressed high knowledge, positive attitude and sound practice of oral health but the level of dental attendance is low because 50% of the participant were reported to had never visited a dentist.

One of the most powerful factors indicated by many cross-sectional and longitudinal studies directly influencing the plaque accumulation on tooth surface is due to inadequate maintenance of oral health. In recent years, the western industrialized countries have a decline have decline in dental caries which was attributed to change in sugar consumption, improved oral hygiene and use of fluoride Hiremath (2009).

Regular brushing with a suitable brush and paste and the use fluoride and fluoride therapy has been shown to be very

effective at controlling dental caries as well as gum problem (periodontal) John (2003).

Hygiene is the science of health and its preservation, a condition or practice such as cleanliness that is conducive to the preservation of health. Oral hygiene is the procedure for preservation of health of the oral cavity, personal maintenance of cleanliness and other measures recommended by dental professional Esther (1999).

## **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

Oral health is a key indicator of overall health and its link with general health is systemic and reciprocal, when oral health is compromised by diseases or injury, general health suffers WHO (2016).

Dental diseases are the most prevalent chronic diseases worldwide and are a costly burden to health care services. The treatment of dental is expensive accounting for between 5-10% of total health care expenditure in industrialized countries. In most developing and low income countries, the prevalence rate of dental caries is high and more than 90% of the caries is untreated. An estimated 5 billion people worldwide suffer from dental caries and most of them are from developing and low income countries Hiremath (2009).

However, it is worrisome to know that in Nigeria a proportion of dentist who have access to oral health facilities do not use it regularly as recommended , this attitude may affect the oral health campaign and dental visit by the general populace Jegede et-al (2016).

In Yobe state Data on oral hygiene is very scarce, and in particular knowledge and practice among students is not available. The purpose of this study is to provide information on oral health knowledge and practice among students, such information will help government and nongovernmental

organization in planning and implementation of oral health intervention.

## OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to assess the knowledge and practice of oral hygiene among secondary school students in Damaturu, Yobe state, Nigeria.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

Data was collected by administering structured questionnaire to 280 students of Government girls’ unity college Damaturu. Simple random sampling was used to select participant and sample size was determined using convenient method.

Descriptive research was used to report the information on knowledge and practice of oral hygiene as they exist among the participant.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

VARIABLES QUESTIONS AND OPTIONS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (NO)	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS (%)
HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE THE STATE OF YOUR TEETH AND GUM		
BAD	0	0
GOOD	187	66.8
EXCELLENT	35	12.5
DON'T KNOW	58	20.7
DO YOU KNOW THAT IT IS RECOMMENDED TO BRUSH YOUR TEETH TWICE DAILY		
YES	234	83.6
NO	46	16.4
DO YOU USE BRUSH AND TOOTHPASTE TO CLEAN YOUR TEETH		
YES	280	100
NO	0	0
DO YOU KNOW THE IMPORTANT OF TOOTHPASTE THAT CONTAIN FLUORIDE		
YES	22	8
DON'T KNOW	258	92
DO YOU USE TOOTHPASTE THAT CONTAIN FLUORIDE		
YES	24	8.6
NO	2	0.7
DON'T KNOW	254	90.7
HOW OFTEN DO YOU BRUSH YOUR TEETH DAILY		

Mohammed Abba Alkali– **Oral Hygiene Knowledge and Practice among Students of Government Girls Unity College Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria**

NEVER	0	0
ONCE	217	77.5
TWICE AND ABOVE	63	22.5
DO YOU KNOW THAT IT IS RECOMMENDED TO VISIT A DENTIST FOR CHECKUP ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR?		
YES	68	24.2
DONT KNOW	212	75.8
HOW LONG IS IT SINCE YOU LAST VISIT A DENTIST		
BELOW ONE YEAR	21	7.5
ONE YEAR AND ABOVE	39	14
NEVER	220	78.5
WHAT WAS THE REASON FOR YOUR LAST VISIT TO DENTIST		
TOOTH/GUM/MOUTH PAIN	54	90
CHECK UP	6	10

The result revealed that majority of the student 187(66.8%) believe that the present state of their teeth and gum were good and 35 of them which account to (12.5%) claimed to have excellent teeth and gum, while 58(20.7%) reported to be ignorant of the state of their teeth and gum. However no student agrees to have Bad teeth and gum condition.

The study found that all the students 280(100%) were using brush and toothpaste in cleaning their teeth which is also similar to study of Kawthar (2017) who found that 80% of the student were using brush and toothpaste to clean their teeth.

Knowledge with regards to brushing teeth twice a day was found to be good as 234 (83.6%) of the respondents reported to had the knowledge while only 46 (16.4%) of the student have mention to have no knowledge of the recommendation. However, despite having the knowledge to brush teeth twice and above daily but only 63 (22.5%) of the respondents were reported to brush their teeth twice a day and majority of the students 217(77.5%) were brushing their teeth once daily and are behaving against the knowledge they claimed to have, while no one agreed to have not brushing their teeth at all daily. It is similar to study carried out by Jegede et-al (2016) which found that 47% of the respondents brush their teeth once daily. However, this is in contrast with the study conducted by Kawthar (2017) which shows that 50% of the students brush their teeth twice a day and 30.6% three times a day while 3.9%

clean their teeth more than three times a day and only 15.6% brush their teeth once daily.

The result also shows that 258(92%) of the students don't know fluoridated tooth paste and it's important, while the remaining 22 (8%) claimed to have known fluoridated toothpaste and it's important. However on using fluoridated toothpaste only 24(8.6%) of the students were reported to be using fluoridated toothpaste, and 2 (0.7%) of the respondents reported to have not using fluoridated tooth paste while majority of the participant 254(90.7%) were reported to have no knowledge on whether they were using fluoridated toothpaste or not, and 16.6% don't use it, while 32.5% don't know whether their toothpaste contain fluoride or not. therefore they were just buying and using toothpaste not knowing if it contain fluoride or not. This also contradicts what was reported by Kawthar (2017) and Jegede et-al (2016) were 50.9% and 100% of the students were reported to have using fluoridated toothpaste.

Findings indicate that most of the students 212 (75.8%) don't know that it is recommended to visit a dentist once or twice a year, while only 68(24.2%) claimed to be aware of the recommendation. The result also revealed that 220(78.5%) of the students were reported to had never visited a dentist and 21 (7.5%) visited a dentist below one year while the remaining 39 (14%) were reported to had visited a dentist from one year and above. This is also similar to the results found by Johnson (2014) on oral health knowledge, attitude, and practice among secondary school students in Nigeria which revealed that the students expressed high knowledge, positive attitude and sound practice of oral health but the level of dental attendance is low because 50% of the participant were reported to had never visited a dentist.

However, out of the 60(21.5%) students which were reported to have visited a dentist 54(90%) of them visited the dentist because of tooth/mouth/gum pain and not for normal check up, and only 6(10%) of the students went to the dentist

for normal checkup. This is also in agreement with the study carried out by Almas K, et-al (2003) on knowledge and practice of oral hygiene methods and attendance pattern among school teachers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia which revealed that 56% of male and 63% of female teachers visited the dentist only on having pain.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study revealed that knowledge and practice related to cleaning teeth is good even though majority of them brush their teeth only once daily which is below the normal recommended practice of twice and above daily. However, almost all the students claimed to have good and excellent teeth which will negatively prevent them from visiting dentist. Moreover, majority of the student don't know the important of fluoridated toothpaste and therefore don't know if they are using it or not. Consequently, it is concluded that there was poor practice of dental visit due to the fact that 75.8% of the students never visited a dentist, and only 10% of those that visited the dentist where there for routine checkup and the remaining 90% were there because of pain.

There is need for oral health enlightenment and campaign with regards to best hygiene practices among students. It is also recommended to include more oral hygiene course in school Curriculum.

Community based oral hygiene campaign will assists in spreading the knowledge to across everyone in the community. Government should provide and equipped primary health facilities with dental health workers so as to help in spreading the knowledge at community level.

## REFERENCE

1. Kawthar Ahmed Daffaalla Mohamed (2017). Knowledge, attitude and practice of oral health among female student in Adha. A thesis submitted to king Khalid University Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the award of M.D in Dental public health
2. Hiremath S.S (2009). Textbook of preventive and community dentistry. ISBN: 978-312-0346-0.
3. John J. Manappallil (2003). Basic dental material second edition. ISBN: 81-8061-153-1.
4. Johnson John Omale (2014). Oral health knowledge, attitudes and practice among secondary schools in Nigeria. PHD dissertation Walden University.
5. Esther M. Wilkins (1999). Clinical practice to the dental hygienist eight edition.
6. Almas K, Almalik T.M, Alshehri M.A, Skaug N (2003). Knowledge and practices of oral hygiene methods among and attendance pattern among school teachers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Saudi Med J. 24(10):1087-91.
7. World health organization (WHO) regional office for Africa (2016). Promoting oral health in Africa: Prevention and control of oral diseases and Noma as part of essential non communicable diseases intervention. ISBN; 978-9290 23297-1.
8. Jegede AT, Oyedele TA, Sodipo BO, Folayon MO.(2016). Oral health knowledge and practice of dentist practicing in a teaching hospital in Nigeria. Indian J Dent 2016;27:137-44