

Original Article

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

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**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<sup>(1,2,3)</sup> . Studies have shown that there is an association between increased knowledge and better oral health<sup>(4,5)</sup> .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<sup>(6)</sup> .

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 <sup>(7)</sup>. 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.