



## DENTAL ORAL HEALTH - ATTITUDE, BEHAVIOR, KNOWLEDGE AMONG DENTAL STUDENTS IN SOUTHERN RAJASTHAN DENTAL COLLEGE

**Dr. Divya Chowdhery**

M.D.S, Asst. Professor, Department of Public Health Dentistry, Pacific Dental College and Research Centre.

### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Attitude and Knowledge of dental student towards Dental oral health plays a crucial role in for delivering a good dental service in total.

**Objectives:** The objective of the study is to determine and compare the Dental oral health attitude, behavior, knowledge among dental students.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional survey of 155 dental students from third year, final year and internship was conducted from Department of Public Health Dentistry, Pacific dental college & Research centre Udaipur. A self-administered questionnaire was used to conduct the survey. Convenience sample was the chosen method of sampling.

**Results:** On an average the knowledge obtained by the students about oral health is 73% and their attitude towards maintaining their personal oral hygiene is 61%.

**Conclusion:** It has been found that the knowledge in oral health increased over years of awareness programe and education and the implementation of this knowledge in improving their personal oral hygiene was satisfactory

**KEYWORDS :** Dental Oral Hygiene, Students, Knowledge, Patients.

### INTRODUCTION

Oral health is considered as a window into our general health. Despite many oral hygiene products being available, oral diseases continue to prevail<sup>[1]</sup> Dental students, as future dental health care providers, have to be observed throughout their academic years. Their knowledge and attitude towards oral hygiene has to be assessed and updated, to evaluate their capacity in providing proper oral health care to the general public, as a dental practitioner.<sup>[2]</sup> Oral behavior indicates an individual perception on one's own oral health. Attitude and behavior of dental student towards oral health holds a crucial part in estimating their capability in delivering a good dental service to the public.<sup>[3]</sup>

WHO (2012) defines oral health as "a state of being free from chronic mouth and facial pain, oral and throat cancer, oral infection and sores, periodontal (gum) disease, tooth decay, tooth loss, and other diseases and disorders that limit an individual's capacity in biting, chewing, smiling, speaking, and psychosocial wellbeing."<sup>[4]</sup>

Certain researches have shown a positive impact of education on oral health attitude and behavior of dental students. Cortes et al 2002,<sup>[5]</sup> in their study found that dental students were motivated about maintaining their oral hygiene and their knowledge had a positive impact on this behavior. On the other hand, certain researches have shown differences in their attitude and behavior. El-Mostehy et al 2013,<sup>[6]</sup> this study aims to determine and compare the oral health knowledge, attitude and behavior among dental students at Pacific dental College & Hospital, Udaipur city.

### MATERIALS AND METHOD:

Cross sectional study was conducted among 250 dental students at Pacific Dental College and Hospital, Udaipur city.

### ETHICAL CLEARANCE:

Prior to the study, ethical clearance was obtained from Pacific dental college and hospital, Udaipur city.

### PILOT STUDY:

A pilot study was conducted among 30 participants, where a pre tested questionnaire was distributed and responses were collected. Refining were made in the question and recording the response before finalizing the overall survey questionnaire.

### Inclusive Criteria

All the dental students studying in final year and internship

were included.

### Exclusive Criteria:

All the dental students studying from first year to third year were excluded and the students not present on the day of the survey, and all the students who were not willing to participate in the survey were excluded.

### Sampling Methodology:

155 samples of final year and internship students were collected using a self-administered questionnaire. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants and informed consent was obtained from the participants. Each participant was given 20 minutes to answer the questionnaire. The personal information of the participants was kept confidential.

Convenience sampling method was chosen. The questionnaire consisted of 16 questions divided into 2 Sections. Section 1 consisted of demographic data and 8 questions related to the oral health behavior of the students. Section 2 consisted of 8 questions related to the oral health attitude of the student. All the questionnaires were scrutinized. Data obtained was uploaded into an Excel sheet and the results were subjected to statistical analysis.

### RESULTS:

The present study comprised of 155 dental students from final year and internship. Of these, 81 from final year and 74 were from internship. Majority of the students were from final year. The mean age range of the students was from 20 to 24 years.

The questionnaire used in the study is as follows. Side A or Section 1 of the questionnaire consisted of questions related to the oral health behavior of the dental students which included questions like the type of tooth brush used by the student, duration of brushing their teeth, usage of other oral hygiene aids, etc. Side B or Section 2 of the questionnaire consisted of questions related to the oral health knowledge and attitude of the dental students which included questions like the type of tooth brush, duration of brushing and any oral hygiene aids they would prescribe their patient, etc.

On the comparison between the first questions from side A "what type of bristled tooth brush do you use?" and from side B "what type of bristled tooth brush do you prescribe your patient?" 56% (n=87) of the students responded to Side A that they would use soft bristles and 61% (n=96) of the students responded to Side B that

they would prescribe soft bristles to their patients.

The comparison between the second questions from Side A and Side B, which are – “how often do you brush your teeth?” and “how often do you advise your patient to brush his/her teeth?” respectively showed that 81% (n=126) of the students responded to side A that they would brush their teeth twice a day, whereas 96% (n=149) of students responded that they would advise their patient to brush his/her teeth twice a day

The response of students for the third questions from Side A and Side B which are- “what is the duration of your brushing?” and “what is the duration of brushing you recommend your patient?” respectively is that, 63% (n=98) of the students responded to side A question that they would brush for 2-3 minutes and 71% (n=110) of the students responded to side B question that they would recommend the patient to brush for 2-3 minutes.

On comparison between the fourth questions from Side A and Side B which are- “which method of brushing do you follow?” and “which method of brushing do you advise your patient?” respectively, 57% (n=88) of the students responded to Side A question that they would follow any combination of vertical, horizontal, and circular motion of brushing. 61% (n=95) of the students responded to question from Side B, that they would advise their patients to follow any combination of vertical, horizontal and circular motion of brushing.

Figure 7 depicts the comparison between the fifth questions from Side A and Side B which are- “do you use any other oral hygiene aids?” and “do you motivate your patient to use any other oral hygiene aids?” respectively. 74% (n=115) of the students responded that they use oral hygiene aids (mouth wash or tongue cleaner or dental floss or inter dental brush). 91% (n=141) of the students responded that they motivate their patients to use other oral hygiene aids.

The comparison between the sixth questions from Side A and Side B which are- “how often do you rinse your mouth?” and “do you suggest your patient to rinse your mouth?” Respectively, showed that 61% (n=95) of the students responded to the question from Side A that they rinse their mouth after every meal and 73% (n=113) of the students responded to the question from Side B that they suggest their patients to rinse their mouth after every meal.

The response of students for the seventh questions from Side A and Side B which are- “how often do you undergo scaling?” and “how often do you advise your patient to undergo scaling?” respectively is as follows. 41.07% (n=63) of the students responded to Side A that they would visit a dentist or undergo scaling once in every 6 months. 61% (n=94) of the students responded to the question from Side B that they advise their patients to undergo scaling once in every 6 months.

On comparison between the eighth questions from Side A and Side B which are- “how often do you change your tooth brush?” and “how often do you recommend your patient to change his/her tooth brush?” respectively, 69% (n=107) of the students responded to the question from Side A that they would change their tooth brush once in 3 months. 63% (n=97) of the students responded to the question from Side B that they would recommend their patients to change his/her tooth brush once in every 3 months.

## DISCUSSION:

One of the general objectives of dentistry is to train experts whose principal task is to educate and motivate patients to maintain a good oral health[7] and hygiene as well for themselves in self-practice [8]. This study showed less significant differences between the oral health attitude of the dental students towards themselves and dental oral health

behavior towards their patients.

It is reported that about 63% of students brush their teeth for 2-3 minutes and 71% of students, advice their patients to brush their teeth for the same duration. 61% of students suggested their patients to brush in combination of vertical, horizontal and circular motion while student percentage (57%) of the students brush their teeth in combination of horizontal, vertical and circular strokes, which is more than that reported among the Finnish dental students which was 12%. [9]

About 78.4% of the students used other oral hygiene aids like mouth wash, tongue cleaner, interdental brush, dental floss which is higher than that reported among the students of Jordan. [10] It is shown that 91% of the students motivate their patients to use other oral hygiene aids.

About 69% of the students recommended their patients to change their tooth brush once in every 3 months, and it was implemented by majority of the students in maintaining their personal oral hygiene practice because almost 63% of students said that they would change their tooth brush once in every 3 months. This finding represents a correlation between the acquired knowledge and practice among dental students.

Dental oral health behavior of the dental students improved with increase in the level of education. On an average the knowledge obtained by the students about oral health is 73% and their attitude towards maintaining their personal oral hygiene is 61%. Their behavior in maintaining their personal oral hygiene is satisfactory. It is also proven that the students participated in this study have better knowledge about oral hygiene, when compared to other studies performed in various places.

The results of this study are constrained as any other cross sectional study. Further longitudinal studies are required to determine the dental oral health knowledge, attitude and behavior of the dental students.

Further studies must be carried in order to compare in detail, the behavior of dental students towards dental oral health care and their attitude towards the patient's oral health.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on this study, conclusion can be drawn into the oral health knowledge, attitude and behavior among dental students. In this study it was found that the overall knowledge of oral health attitude among the dental students from final year and internship was good. The implementation of the oral health knowledge in improving their personal oral hygiene was satisfactory.

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