



HEALTH AWARENESS; EXPLORING PERIODONTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND PRACTICES AMONG PATIENTS AT LARKANA.

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ABSTRACT... Objectives: The objective of this study was to determine the awareness and practices about periodontal health among patients of Larkana. **Study Design:** Cross sectional study. **Setting:** Periodontology Department of Bibi Aseefa Dental College, Larkana. **Period:** October 2016 to May 2017 **Material and Methods:** Three hundred and thirty two patients were randomly selected over a period of almost eight months at department of periodontology, Bibi Aseefa Dental College, Larkana. A self-designed questionnaire was used to collect data by interviewing the patients. The questionnaire comprised of two parts. First part consisted of questions regarding demographic data. The second part was consisted of seven (7) multiple choice question to collect data regarding assessment of awareness and practices regarding periodontal health. **Results:** Out of the total 332 patients, 214 (64%) were male and 118 (36%) were females. The most common age decade was third. Total 77% of participants were unaware regarding consequences of periodontal diseases. Approximately 75% of participants reported using a toothbrush and toothpaste to clean their teeth. 68% of participants used to brush their teeth once a day in this study. About 46% of participants brushed their teeth for up to 1 minute. Television and media were the sources of selecting the toothbrush and toothpaste by 57% of participants. Dental floss was not used by 96% of participants. 87% of participants visited the dentist due to dental problem. **Conclusion:** It is concluded that the awareness and practices of patients about periodontal health was not satisfactory and needs to be improved through community based dental programs. Oral health awareness programs at schools, colleges, universities, and community levels should be commenced in urban especially in rural areas.

Key words: Awareness, Larkana, Patients, Periodontal Health, Practices.

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INTRODUCTION

The general health and wellbeing of an individual is closely related with better oral health. The oral health is disturbed by two major inflammatory diseases including gingivitis and periodontitis, which disturb the one or more constituents of periodontium including periodontal ligament, cementum, and alveolar bone due to combined process of plaque and periodontal tissues through vascular and cellular responses.¹ Gingival bleeding, food packing, pain, swelling, discomfort and irritation are the manifestation of periodontal disease. Any individual can be affected regardless of age, gender, race and place of residence.²

One of the major cause of tooth loss is periodontal disease, which leads to distresses

the masticatory ability, esthetics and speech problem in combination with psychological changes.³ Periodontal disease affects 90% of population either by gingivitis or periodontitis in the world.⁴ The dental plaque is the major etiological factor of periodontal disease. It is a biofilm comprised dominantly of microorganisms. Periodontal disease is caused by directly release of toxic metabolic product and toxin enzymes by microorganisms which lead to activation of compliment system and hypersensitivity reaction.⁵ Though, occurrence of periodontal disease is due to disturbance of balance between host resistance and etiological factors.⁶ Hormonal changes, Poor nutrition, diabetes, physical inactivity, obesity, extreme use of alcohol, tobacco use, smoking, psychosocial stress, poor oral hygiene, and general health are the principal

risk factors decreases the host immune response which may initiate and progress the periodontal diseases.⁷ Strict control is needed to eliminate the etiologic factors such as plaque.

To prevent periodontal disease including gingivitis and periodontitis, tooth brushing is considered as viable technique of expelling substantial amount of plaque. There is a strong correlation between brushing frequency and the reduction in plaque.⁸ In order to prevent and control periodontal diseases, twice brushing in morning and night and at least for 2 minutes is recommended by numerous professionals for a long time since it assumes a noteworthy part.⁹ In developed countries, tooth pastes are most commonly used but traditional tooth brushing such as miswak and salt are still using by people in some countries.¹⁰ To achieve maximum benefits from brushing your teeth, starting at the back of your mouth with the toothbrush bristle at the gumline on a 45° angle, you should systematically clean your teeth, brushing gently in a circular motion. Scrubbing too hard from side to side runs the risk of causing your gums to recede, as well as damaging the enamel on the surface of your teeth.⁹ However, plaque is still remained between teeth and below gum line unless use of dental floss. Flossing will remove the plaque from the hard to reach areas that tooth brush cannot reach. Combining the use of dental floss with tooth brushing each day is the most effective way to remove all the plaque on the teeth.⁸ Since, periodontal disease is one of leading cause of tooth loss and has negative impact on quality of life among individuals and communities. Hence, this study made an attempt to measure awareness and evaluate practices of patients which prevents development and progression of periodontal disease. The outcome of this study would provide baseline information for planning oral health education program aimed to improve the oral health of local population of District Larkana. Moreover, the findings of this study would be beneficial for dental health personnel to plan for prevention and treatment of periodontal problems.

METHODOLOGY

This cross sectional study was conducted

at periodontology department of Bibi Aseefa Dental College, Larkana from October 2016 to May 2017. Three hundred and thirty two patients were randomly selected who came for seeking treatment. Patients' inclusion criteria for the study were; patients of both gender, age ranging between 18 to 75 years, and cooperative patients. Patients excluded from the study were; completely edentulous patients, mentally and physically handicapped patients, congenital or acquired dentoalveolar defects, patients unable to respond to questionnaire, dentists, dental technicians and assistants. The patients were informed about the purpose of the study. A self-designed questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire comprised of two parts. First part was consisted of questions regarding demographic data. The second part was consisted of 7 multiple choice question regarding assessment of periodontal health. After obtaining informed consent, data was collected by interviewing the patients using self-designed questionnaire. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18 was used for data analysis.

RESULTS

Out of the total 332 patients, 214 (64%) were male and 118 (36%) were females. The most common age decade of study patients was third (Table-I). Total 77% of participants were unaware regarding consequences of periodontal diseases. Approximately 75% of participants reported using a toothbrush and toothpaste to clean their teeth. Moreover, 68% of participants used to brush their teeth once a day in this study. About 46% of participants brushed their teeth for up to 1 minute. Television and media were the sources of selecting the toothbrush and toothpaste by 57% of participants. Dental floss was not used by 96% of participants. 87% of participants visited the dentist due to dental problem (Table-II).

Factor		Frequency	%Age
Gender	Male	214	64
	Female	118	36
	Total	332	100
Age	18-36 y	222	67
	37-56y	95	29
	57-75	05	1

Table-I. Demographic data of participants

Question	Response Options	Frequency	Percentage
1. Do u know the consequences of periodontal diseases?	1.Yes 2.No	78 154	23 77
2. Which tool do you use for cleaning teeth	1. Miswak 2. Tooth brush and paste 3. Abrasive powder using finger	65 248 19	19 75 6
3. How many times a day do you brush your teeth	1. Once 2. Twice 3. Thrice 4. More than thrice	168 57 18 05	68 23 7 2
4. How long do you brush your teeth	1. up to1 minute 2. up to2 minutes 3. up to3 minutes 4. More than 3 minutes	113 98 24 13	46 40 9 5
5. How do you select your tooth brush and paste	1. As recommended by dentist 2.Try different brushes 3.Through advertisement in television and other media sources 4. Prefer cheaper one	21 14 142 71	8 6 57 29
6. Do you use dental floss	1. Yes 2. No	11 237	4 96
7. How often do you visit your dentist	1.When I have problem in my teeth 2. After six month 3. Once a year 4. More than a year	288 32 08 04	87 10 2 1

Table-II. Response of participants in relation to assessment of awareness and practices regarding periodontal health

DISCUSSION

One of the leading causes of tooth loss is periodontal disease, which leads to decreased masticatory ability, esthetics and speech problem in combination with psychological changes. The periodontal disease either gingivitis or periodontitis affects approximately 90% of population in the world.

In current study, it was observed that most of the patients did not have adequate awareness regarding periodontal disease. Total 77% of study participants were unaware of consequences of periodontal diseases. This result is in contrast to a study which was conducted in Japan.¹¹ This difference could be attributed to lack of literacy among present study population which consequently leads to decreased awareness about periodontal disease. Moreover, it was observed that study participants were very well aware of dental decay and its consequences.

When asked about practices, it was found approximately 75% of the subjects reported using

a toothbrush and toothpaste to clean their teeth. While the findings of present study are almost similar to the previous studies conducted at home and abroad including India and Jordan.¹²⁻¹⁷ In present study 68% of participants used to brush their teeth once a day. The result of present study is consistent with the results of previous studies.^{13,14,18} In present study it was found that that 86% of participants brushed their teeth for 1 to 2 minute. This is in contrast with previous study conducted in India.¹⁴ This disagreement in findings between studies could be because of variable reasons the most important is variable level of awareness regarding frequency and duration of tooth brushing among population of these two studies.

Moreover, television and media were the major source in selecting the toothbrush and toothpaste by 57% of participants in current study. This result is similar to the study conducted in India.¹⁶

In this study, findings revealed that dental floss was not used by 96% of participants, which is

similar to the results of previous studies.^{13,17,19} There is a striking contrast of this result with previous study conducted in Canada.²⁰ This might be due to lack awareness regarding utility of interdental aids and another reason could be due to lack of availability of these interdental aids. Total 87% of study participants visited the dentist due to dental problem in current study which is in agreement with previous studies.^{13,14,17}

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the awareness and practices of patients about periodontal oral health was not satisfactory and needs to be improved through community based dental programs. Oral health awareness programs at schools, colleges, universities, and community levels should be commenced especially in rural areas.

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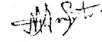

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Enjoy these **moments** now,
because they don't last **forever**.

”

“Unknown”

AUTHORSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION DECLARATION

Sr. #	Author-s Full Name	Contribution to the paper	Author=s Signature
1	M. Amin Sahito	Concept of paper and data collection, results write up.	
2	Imran Samejo	Literature review, data analysis and discussion write up.	
3	Shahid Ali Mirani	Critical review and revision of manuscript after review.	