

## **Abstract for tropEd website**

**Author:** Arwa Omer Saeed Musa

**Profession:** Dentist

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**Title:** Oral Health Care Seeking Behaviour among Primary School Teachers in Khartoum Middle Administrative unit-Khartoum state-Sudan (2015)

**Key words:** dental care seeking behaviour, oral health service utilization, barriers of dental health, oral health status, hygienic habits, oral health knowledge

**Research Institution:** Institute of Tropical Medicine and International Health, Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin/Germany

**Supervisor:** Dr. Nazik Mostafa Nurelhuda, Department of dental public health, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Khartoum-Khartoum-Sudan

**Co-supervisor (statistical Support):** Dr. Ulrike Grittner, Department for Biostatistics and Clinical Epidemiology / Centre for Stroke Research, Charité - University Medicine Berlin

### **Abstract:**

**Background:** The prevalence of oral health diseases is increasing throughout Middle East and African region. Unfortunately, today reports show that dental care utilization is very limited and that individuals tend to wait until they have severe symptoms to seek professional dental care. Maintaining good oral health behaviours is the key factor in preventing oral disease. Seeding good oral health behaviours in children is considered very efficient in preventing and reducing dental diseases. Such approach can be done by utilizing the teachers in schools oral health promotion programs, but before that an assessment about the teachers' oral health behaviours should be done and accordingly interventions can be determined.

**Objective:** The aim of this study is to determine the oral health care seeking behaviour among Sudanese teachers in Khartoum Middle Administrative Unit, and also assessing their reported oral health status, oral hygiene practices, the barriers and determinants of seeking professional oral health care and the level of knowledge about the importance of oral health.

**Methodology:** Across sectional survey was conducted among 385 primary school teachers in Khartoum Middle administrative unit. One stage cluster sampling was used as school were the cluster and the teachers were the units of analysis. The data was collected by interviewer

administered questionnaire. The data was analysed using Stata program ver.12. Means and standard deviations were computed for all the quantitative variables and frequency and percentages were generated for all the qualitative variables. The chi square test was used as test of significance when comparing categorical variables while the mean tests were used to compare differences for quantitative variables. Logistic regression was done to detect the factors that are purely associated with dependant variables and it was performed using mixed models to account for clustered data. Associations are considered of significance when the p value is equal or less than 0.05

**Results:** The response rate was 100%. The majority of teachers (83.4%) considered seeking dental care only when they experienced disease symptom. The key driving symptom for seeking care was pain (58.4%). The main barrier for not seeking care was the perception that disease symptoms were not serious (26.2%). Eighty percent of the study participants brushed their teeth twice/day but the use of dental floss and daily mouth washes was by 13.5% and 5.4%, respectively. The knowledge of teachers about oral health preventive measures was moderate.

### **Conclusions:**

The teachers' attitude toward dental health utilization was poor with the majority of them ignoring non serious diseases symptoms or trying to seek other treatments modalities rather than seeking professional care and consider consulting a dentist just in case of severe pain presenting with a late stage of their dental diseases. The teachers' attitude towards hygienic practices was satisfactory, as very few of them considered the use of other recommended dental cleaners such as dental floss and daily mouthwashes. The teacher's' level of knowledge about oral health preventive measures need to be improved. Teachers should be enrolled in workshops and training session to raise their awareness about oral health then they can be utilized as oral health educators