

Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice of Oral Health Hygiene Among Undergraduates in Bingham University, Karu, Nasarawa, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Oral health is an essential component of general health and quality of life, enabling individuals to eat, speak, and socialize without discomfort. Despite this, oral hygiene is often neglected amongst university students due to various personal and systemic factors or barriers. This study investigates the knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) of oral health among undergraduates at Bingham University, Karu, and identifies the barriers that hinder the maintenance of proper oral hygiene.

Methodology: This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 375 undergraduate students at Bingham University. Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire. Responses were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 25. Chi-square tests were applied to assess associations between demographic variables and KAP outcomes.

Results: Among the respondents, 48.3% exhibited moderate knowledge of oral health, 40.8% had good knowledge, and 10.9% had poor knowledge. Most of the students had a positive attitude towards oral health (94.4%). Although the participants had good knowledge, their practice was poor (70.0%). The primary barriers identified were the cost of dental care (42.1%), time constraints (33.1%), forgetfulness (31.7%), limited access to dental facilities (27.7%), fear of procedures (26.1%), and lack of knowledge (24.5%).

Conclusion: This study revealed generally moderate to good oral health knowledge and positive attitudes among Bingham University undergraduates. However, actual oral hygiene practices were flawed. The gap between knowledge/attitude and practice is widened by personal and structural barriers. Addressing these challenges through integrated oral health education, improved access to care, and behavioral interventions is essential for enhancing oral hygiene outcomes among university students.

