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## Periodontal health literacy assessment in two most literate cities of India

**Swati**

Sharda University, India

**Background and objectives:** According to World Oral Health report 2003, the prevalence of periodontitis is 86% in India and is often neglected. Oral health literacy is defined as ‘The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic oral health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.’(HealthyPeople2010). Developing adequate levels of health literacy may depend on external factors such as education, experiences in health settings and family attitudes; and individual factors such as cognitive ability and prior knowledge. There is scarce data available on dental health awareness and oral hygiene practices in India. The purpose of this study was to examine if there is a relationship between the education status and oral health literacy in two of the most literate tricity (Chandigarh) and another state Kerala in India.

**Materials and methods:** The study was conducted from Jan 2015 to May 2015 in the city of Chandigarh and Kerala. Patients in the age group of 17-65 from few private dental clinics in both the cities were randomly asked to fill out a self-administered structured questionnaire. 500 patients returned the questionnaire. The results were analyzed using Chi square test.

**Results and conclusion:** The results of the study suggested that the only 50% of the population is aware about the periodontal problems and the treatment strategies. Also the role of general practitioners in creating awareness was not satisfactory. The study has shown that there was only 40% oral health awareness in states with 90% literacy rate. The study has highlighted the need of oral health awareness on a larger scale in developing countries like India. Surveys in more number of states are required to determine the status of oral health knowledge.

[swati.gup9@gmail.com](mailto:swati.gup9@gmail.com)

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