

**ABSTRACT**

**Perception of Periodontal Health Among Patients with BPE Score 4 in Tawau, Sabah, and the Associated Factors: A Cross-Sectional Study**

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**Introduction:** Individuals' perception of periodontal health is influenced not only by signs and symptoms of periodontal diseases but also by socio-demographics and oral health practices. This study aimed to determine the association between self-perceived periodontal health, sociodemographic characteristics, and oral health practices.

**Methods:** This is a cross-sectional study using a validated questionnaire, which comprises sociodemographic characteristics, oral health practices, and self-perceived periodontal health. The calculated sample size was 149 adult subjects in Tawau District, Sabah with a Basic Periodontal Examination (BPE) score of 4. Multiple logistic/linear regression was used to determine the association between the variables. The significant level was set at  $p < 0.05$ . **Results:** The total number of respondents was 149 and the mean (SD) age was 47.7 (14.92) years. Having been told by a dentist to have periodontal diseases ( $\beta = 1.167$ , Exp (B) = 3.214,  $P = 0.026$ ) was found to be significantly associated with the perception of having periodontal diseases. The oral health practice of using mouthwash regularly ( $\beta = 1.027$ , Exp (B) = 2.791,  $P = 0.020$ ), perceived to have bleeding gum ( $\beta = 2.293$ , Exp (B) = 9.906,  $P < 0.001$ ) and perceived to have wobbly teeth ( $\beta = 0.990$ , Exp (B) = 2.690,  $P = 0.037$ ) were significantly associated with the perception of having gingival swelling. The use of dental floss regularly was significantly associated with the perception of needing specialist care for periodontal diseases ( $\beta = 1.662$ , Exp (B) =

5.268,  $P=0.017$ ). **Conclusion:** In conclusion, dental visits and oral health practices were significantly associated with self-perceived periodontal health. This study helps to improve

the understanding among dental officers of the perception of periodontal health hence increasing the referral to periodontists.