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Unveiling Understanding of Periodontitis Among Thai Adults: A Cross-sectional Study

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Abstract

Objectives: This study aims to assess the knowledge depth regarding periodontitis among Thai adults using open-ended questions and explore the factors influencing their comprehension of the disease.

Methods: A cross-sectional questionnaire-based study was conducted involving Thai adults aged 18 years and above. Participants were asked to describe periodontitis in an open-ended question and were classified as "totally correct" (TC), "partially correct" (PC) or "incorrect" (IC) based on the American Academy of Periodontology's definition. Subgroup comparisons were performed using the Chi-square test.

Results: Out of the 1205 participants analyzed, the majority (72.4%) fell into the PC category, primarily associating periodontitis with gingival inflammation. Terms such as "gingival inflammation," "gingival swelling," and "gingival bleeding" were frequently mentioned. Participants mentioning keywords related to attachment loss were more likely to demonstrate a better comprehension of the disease. Significant associations were observed between participants' familiarity with periodontitis and factors such as age ($p < 0.05$), educational level ($p < 0.05$), and frequency of dental visits ($p = 0.001$).

Conclusions: This study highlights the superficial understanding of periodontitis within the Thai population, notably the limited awareness beyond gingival inflammation.

Keywords: attachment loss, gingival inflammation, knowledge, periodontitis, Thai population