Author's response to reviews

Title: Knowledge about tooth avulsion and its management among dental assistants in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Submission Title: Knowledge about tooth avulsion and its management among dental assistants in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Dear Editor,

We thank the reviewers for pointing out the errors and helping us to correct and improve the manuscript. We have modified the paper in response to the extensive and insightful reviewer comments and we are confident that the new version of the manuscript has a more fluent scientific discourse. Furthermore, we hope that the revised manuscript comply with the referees’ remarks. We will respond to the comments point counter point.

Reviewer: Joanna Baginska

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Background: Authors should re-write the aim of the study. At present, the aim emphasizes the workplace of a dental assistant as the major aspect taken into consideration for the analysis. The main focus of the manuscript is rather on other variables like the education level.
   **Response:** The aim of the study has been rewritten accordingly in the abstract and text.

2. Methods: Authors should clarify the method of selection of participants for the survey. Was it random?
   **Response:** The method of selection of participants was not random. A convenience sampling methodology was employed for sample selection. It has been added in the second paragraph of the Methods section.

3. Results: Authors declare that 498 questionnaires with complete data were returned, however, in Table 1, the total sum of respondents according to ‘age (years old)’ is 472 and according to ‘years of experience’ is 488. The same problem occurs in Tables 2 and 3 – in case of some questions the number of respondents is lower than 498. Similar problem concerns data in fourth paragraph of the Results section. It should be explained by authors. How did authors calculate the overall knowledge score in case of the lack of data?
   **Response:** An inadvertent error has occurred in the first sentence of Results section. The 498 questionnaires returned were suitable for analysis even though there were few missing values which were negligible. Therefore, the word ‘complete’ has been deleted from the first sentence in the Results section. Furthermore, the exact missing values have been added in the respective tables as footnotes.
The overall knowledge score was calculated based on the scores obtained by each participant for seven questions (Question numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). Correct answers were assigned one point each and zero points for wrong answers or for unanswered above mentioned questions. A few missing values for these questions (added in the respective tables as footnotes) will only have a negligible effect on the overall knowledge score.

Discretionary Revisions

Minor issues not for publication

1. Authors should revise the manuscript with regard to style. There are many repetitions, e.g. in the first two sentences of the Background section the word ‘injury’ was used five times. I suggest using synonyms like ‘trauma’ or ‘avulsion’. The third sentence in the second paragraph of the Background should also be rewritten to avoid unfortunate repetitions of the word ‘guidelines’. The same applies to the Results section – authors may use such words as participants, subjects or evaluated dental assistants interchangeably with respondents.
   **Response:** All the suggested changes have been made accordingly.

2. In my opinion, authors should avoid referring to the appendix in the Discussion section.
   **Response:** ‘refer to appendix’ has been deleted from the Discussion section.

3. In the sentence where they refer to the papers of Baginska and Wilczynska-Borawska, the correct name of profession is ‘school nurses’ and not ‘school dental nurses’.
   **Response:** We regret the error and it has been corrected.

4. The first sentence of the next-to-last paragraph of the Discussion section is too long and should be rewritten or divided into two sentences.
   **Response:** This sentence has been divided into two sentences.

**Reviewer:** Chaiana Piovesan

Major Compulsory Revisions

**ABSTRACT**

1. Material and Methods: Where the study was conducted? Is the study about permanent and primary tooth avulsion?
   **Response:** The study was conducted in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia which is mentioned in the title and aim of the study. Therefore, it was not repeated in the Methods section. This
study evaluated the level of knowledge about primary and permanent tooth avulsion and its management. This detail has been added accordingly as the 3rd sentence of Material and Methods section in Abstract.

BACKGROUND

1. Although the introduction is well written and contemplates issues related to oral knowledge about tooth avulsion and its management, it is important to report the prevalence of avulsion in Saudi Arabia. Are there studies about prevalence of avulsion in Saudi Arabia? If yes, it is suggested to include in introduction.

   Response: Details pertaining to the prevalence of avulsion in Saudi Arabia was included in the 2nd paragraph of the Background section (references 10 and 11) of the initial submission. It has been highlighted in the resubmission.

METHODS

1. What is Riyadh’ population?

   Response: This study was conducted among dental assistants working in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the population of dental assistants and not the general population were taken into consideration. The total number of dental assistants working in Saudi Arabia and in Riyadh has been mentioned in the 3rd paragraph of the Methods section.

2. Why were distributed 691 questionnaires?

   Response: A convenience sampling methodology was employed for sample selection. Therefore, within a predetermined study period of 4 months, we were able to approach 691 dental assistants of which 498 were willing to participate and completed the questionnaire.

3. Was performed sample calculation? How participants were select? Randomly? Were included in larger hospitals, clinics, polyclinics and dental schools more dental assistants?

   Response: Sample size calculation was not performed. A convenience sampling methodology was employed for sample selection. More dental assistants were employed in dental schools and larger hospitals than clinics and polyclinics and hence, more dental assistants from the dental schools and larger hospitals participated in this study compared to private clinics and polyclinics.

4. Is important to establish that the study is about the knowledge of permanent and primary tooth avulsion.
Response: Details pertaining to this has been added in the 4th paragraph of Methods section in the text.

RESULTS

1. It is suggested to report how many dental assistants answered the questionnaire in private and public hospitals, clinics, polyclinics and dental schools in Riyadh.
   Response: The total number of participants working in private and public hospitals, clinics, polyclinics and dental schools was given in Table 1 of the initial submission. It is highlighted in the resubmission.

2. There are statistical difference in responses showed in table 2 and 3?
   Response: Except for question 2 in Table 2 and question 3 in Table 3, there were statistically significant differences in responses between the two groups (Dental degree and Non-dental degree). However, these details were not added in the text to avoid too much description of the results and thereby, causing confusion to the reader. We also assumed that Table 4 will give a clear picture of the significance of educational qualification (Dental degree vs Non-dental degree) on the level of knowledge of tooth avulsion (total score).

DISCUSSION

1. It suggested rewriting the aim according the abstract.
   Response: The aim of the study has been rewritten as in the abstract.