

POSTER ABSTRACT**Perception of Sudanese Mothers Toward Milk Tooth Extraction Among
Children****in Khartoum Hospitals (2022) .**

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Hamzaelhussein Mohieldin^{1,6}, Da'ad Abdalla², Zahra Abelaziz⁴, Danya Ibrahim², Rana Bakri⁵, Nagat Taha³, Dalya SirElkhatim², Mohammed Ganim^{1,7}, Zainab Mohammed²

1: KURA Research Center, Sudan

6: University of Kasaala , Faculty of Medicine, Sudan

2: University of Khartoum , Faculty of Medicine, Sudan

4: University of Science and Technology, and, Sudan

5: National Ribat University, Sudan

3: University of Khartoum,

Background: Harmful traditional practices continue to affect children, being the major causes of the prevalence of those practices in Sub Saharan Africa ,and also in Sudan. One such practice, milk tooth extraction (MTE) the manual removal of un erupted primary canines is most frequently performed on children under five years old. It is the common belief that such practice can heal symptoms like diarrhea , vomiting , and fever. Though it is still there, very little contemporary evidence exists on the prevalence and perception of MTE in Sudan. This study aimed to establish the prevalence of MTE and to investigate mothers' perceptions of this practice in Khartoum State.

Approach: The cross-sectional hospital study was carried out in seven major teaching hospitals in Khartoum state. Parents of children under five, 385 in total, were interviewed with the help of a semi-structured questionnaire, which included questions related to the socio-demographic data, awareness, attitudes, and experience of MTE. Data were analyzed using SPSS V21. Descriptive statistics and bivariate logistic regression were applied to identify the factors associated with practice.

Results: The findings indicate that the average age of the Participants was 34.9 ± 7.5 years, and the mean age of the children was 2.1 ± 1.3 years. Among Mothers 94.3% had heard of MTE and 18.4% admitted that their children had been through the operation. Nearly 40% of mothers considered MTE as good, most of them (69.4%) pointing to family tradition, (56.1%) - diarrhea, and (37.7%) - fever. MTE was significantly associated with lower maternal education, rural origin, and older maternal age ($P < 0.05$). Most mothers reported that the procedure was performed by

using traditional unsterile sharp instruments , fortunately no major complication were reported despite the imminent danger .

Implications: Despite being a deeply cultural practice, MTE is still a medically injurious one to the children of Sudanese mothers. The findings call for the provision of healthcare education that is attuned to the culture and of community-based interventions through the level of primary healthcare. Involving campaigns to create awareness among mothers of reproductive age and healthcare workers will facilitate clearing up wrong beliefs, lowering the incidences of infant oral mutilation, and consolidating child health care systems in Sudan as well as in other comparable regions.