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Assessment of Personal Hygiene Knowledge and Practices: An Empirical Study of Schooling Children in Warangal

Dr. B. Suresh Lal[1], Dr. G. Kavitha[2]

Department of Economics, Kakatiya University, Warangal-TS, India

Abstract: ***Personal hygiene is very important issues for adolescent students. As hands are important mode of transmission of infectious disease among school-aged children, simple hand washing with soap helps to protect children from the two common global paediatric killers- diarrhoea and lower respiratory infection. The study observed that majority of school going boys is practicing personal hygiene. Moe than 90% children are adolescents. 37% children are pursuing class VII and 44% parents are illiterates. 100% boys do regular bath and 91% brush their teeth daily. 100% students practicing hand wash and 48% used soap for hand wash. 66% students replied that they wash hands after toilet. 85% students are maintaining their clothes clean and neat. It is also observed that 64% students share their combs with other students. 84% students trim their nails regularly and 58% percent students used handkerchief at the time of cough and sneezing. 56% students get awareness on personal hygiene issues from their teachers.***

Keywords: Personal hygiene, Knowledge Attitudes, Practices, Primary school children, Warangal.

1. Introduction

Good personal hygiene in primary school children could be effective towards preventing infectious diseases. Cleanliness in individuals in communities can reduce threats especially by communicable diseases, thereby improving the overall health of a community. Based on population health analysis Winslow CEA (1920), Sixty-two percent and 31% of all deaths in Africa and Southeast Asia, respectively, are caused by infectious disease Curtis VA (2009). This trend is especially notable in developing countries where acute respiratory and intestinal infections are the primary causes of morbidity and mortality among young children WHO (2009).

Previous hand hygiene studies have indicated that children with proper hand washing practices are less likely to report gastrointestinal and respiratory symptoms Ejemot RI (2008), Snow M (2008). Hand washing with soap has been reported to reduce diarrheal morbidity by 44% and respiratory infections by 23% UNCF, (2009), WHO (2009). However, globally, the rates at which hands are washed with soap range from only 0-34% of the time GHD (2009). A study conducted by the Global Public–Private Partnership for Hand Washing (PPPHW) which included several sub-Saharan African countries (i.e. Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda) reported that 17% of participants washed their hands with soap after using the toilet, while 45% used only water WHO (2009).

2. Definition

The word Hygiene has evolved from the Greek term ***"Hygeia"*** which means "Goddess of Health". Hygiene can be defined as, "The science and art which is associated with the preservation and promotion of health", Keshav (2008).

3. Concept of Personal Hygiene

Personal hygiene includes different habits i.e., washing hands and brushing teeth which keep bacteria, viruses and fungal far away from our bodies. Moreover these habits will help us to protect our mental health and activity. Also good personal hygiene will help us to keep feeling good about ourselves. Since those who do not take care of their personal hygiene i.e., dirty clothes, body odor and bad breath will suffer from discrimination and this will mainly lead to mental problems. But the most important point in this subject is that all people have their own hygiene but some people do it better than others, this mainly depends on each person's culture, society and family norm, Rasool (2012).

As hands are important mode of transmission of infectious disease among school-aged children, simple hand washing with soap helps to protect children from the two common global paediatric killers (diarrhoea and lower respiratory infection) Kinley Britt (2011), Aiello AE (2008), hand hygiene significantly reduce illness-related absences in elementary school students by 26% Nandrup-Bus (2009). Critical times for hand washing include after using the toilet, after cleaning a child, and before handling food, Scott BRT (2007), WHO (2004), Suresh Lal (2008).

Attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs are some of the measures which are thought to be on the causal pathway to behaviour. Poor knowledge and practice of, and attitudes to personal hygiene has negative consequences for a child's long term overall development Scott BRT (2007). A study conducted in Ethiopia found that 60% of children surveyed did not know about the possible transmission of diseases through human waste Kumie A (2005). Awareness of health aspects of sanitation behaviour is important because it determines the degree of sustainability of an intervention in sanitation. Perception strongly influences one's hand washing beliefs and practices Suresh Lal (2015).

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4. Materials and Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach and respondents were selected by a convenience sampling. A qualitative study was done because it relies on the opinion of individuals; ask broad, general questions and data collection consists large of words or texts (Creswell, 2005). For this study, in-depth interviews were used as other methods such as questionnaires or observational analysis alone would not produce the in-depth information and perception about the personal hygiene and practices. The study was conducted between March- April 2016. A total of 100 school going boys who are willing to participate in survey were selected and interviewed in Warangal District. This study used quantitative analysis like percentage and ANOVA.

Objectives

- To study the knowledge of personal hygiene of school going children
- To find out level of understanding of personal hygiene of children
- To examine the practice of personal hygiene in the individual levels.

Hypotheses

Knowledge of personal hygiene leads to healthy life Positive attitude of the children make practice personal hygiene

5. Results

Demographic information

Demographic and education details related to sample respondents are presented in Table-1. Among the 100 school going children, 44 % are in the age group of 15-16yrs, 35% children are in 13-14 yrs age group and remaining 21% children are in 10-12 yrs. This study indicates that majority children are from backward class i.e., 45% whereas schedule caste children are accounting 25% and the schedule tribe and others community children are equally accounts 15%. This study observed that majority school going boys are adolescents, this is very crucial stage for boys.

Table 1: Demographic and Educational Status

S. No	*Parameters*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
1	Age		
	10-12 Yrs	21	21
	13-14 Yrs	35	35
	15-16 Yrs	44	44
2	Community		
	SC	25	25
	ST	15	15
	BC	45	45
	Others	15	15
3	Class		
	VI Class	19	19
	VII Class	37	37
	VIII Class	21	21
	IX Class	23	23
4	Parent Education		
	Illiterate	44	44
	Primary	28	28
	SSC	20	20
	Inter	8	8

Source: Field study data

The table also provides the information about education of the children as well as their parents education. Out of 100 children 37% from class VII. 23% children from class IX. While 21% children from class VIII, whereas 19% children from class VI. Information regarding parents' education levels reveals that majority i.e., 44% out of 100 are illiterates, 28% parents are having primary level education and remaining 28% having SSC and above levels of education. The study is carried out from rural area, most of the parents of the school going children are illiterates.

Table 2: Awareness of Personal Hygiene Practices

SNo	Parameters	Frequency	Percent
1	Bath Regularly		
	Yes	100	100
2	Head bath		
	Daily	21	21
	4-Feb	43	43
	6-Apr	36	36
3	Brush your teeth Regularly		
	Morning	91	91
	Morning& Night	9	9
4	Any bad smell from your mouth		
	Yes	20	20
	No	80	80
5	Dental problems		
	Yes	28	28
	No	72	72
6	Problems		
	Pipallu	17	17
	Broken teeth	7	7
	Bad smell	4	4
	Don't know	72	72

Source: Field study data

Awareness of Personal Hygiene Practices

Table-2: provides the information on awareness of personal hygiene practice of school going children. Cent percent children are doing bath regularly. 43 % children do head bath between 2-4 days, 36% children do between 4-6 days and remaining 21% children do daily. 91% children brush their teeth daily morning and remaining nine percent brush their teeth morning and night. Majority students replied that they don't have any bad smell from their mouth.

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Table 3: Assessment of Personal Hygiene Practices

S. No	Parameters	Frequency	Percent
1	Hand wash practice		
	Yes	100	100
2	Material use for hand wash		
	Soap	48	48
	Water	52	52
3	Wash hands before eating		
	Yes	100	100
4	Wash hands after Toilet		
	Yes	66	66
	No	34	34
5	Maintain your clothes neat and clean		
	Yes	85	85
	No	15	15
6	When your wash clothes		
	Daily	35	35
	2-3 days	50	50
	4-5 days	15	15
7	Dry your clothes at sun light		
	Yes	100	100

Source: Field study data

Assessment of Personal Hygiene Practices

Table-3: reveals that hundred percent students practicing hand wash. The material use for hand wash is soap for 48% and only water 52%. The hundred percent students practicing hand wash before eating. A question was asked as to hand wash after toilet. 66% students replied that yes and remaining 34% said no. About the maintenance of clothes neat and clean, 85% students replied yes and 15% said no. The table further reveals that 65% students wash their clothes weekends and remaining 35% wash daily. Most of the students of the rural areas usually dry their clothes in the sunlight only.

Table 4: Knowledge level of Personal Hygiene Education

S.No	Parameters	Frequency	Percent
1	Personal Hygiene Education Imparted as a part of Curriculum		
	Yes	100	100
2	Aspects of Hygiene Evaluated in School During Inspection		
	School uniform-shoes	25	25
	Hair-nail cutting	25	25
	Over all hygiene	27	27
	All above	23	23
3	Awareness of the Personal Hygiene		
	Parent	20	20
	School teachers	56	56
	Books	24	24
4	Share the other Things		
	Comb	60	60
	Towel	34	34
	Spectacles	6	6
5	Water Container Clean and Coverage		
	Yes	84	84
	No	16	16
6	Cutting Nails Regularly		
	Yes	84	84
	No	16	16
7	Use Hand Kerchief with Cough and Sneezing		
	Yes	58	58
	No	42	42
8	Eat Healthy and Balanced Diet		
	Yes	100	100

Source: Field study data

Knowledge level of Personal Hygiene Education

Table-4: depicts that hundred percent students learning personal hygiene education as part of their curriculum. Every day in the school hours teachers inspect personal hygiene practices aspects. 56% students get awareness from their teachers, whereas 24% students' gets awareness through books and remaining 20% get from their parents. 64 students out of 100 share their comb with other students while 34% students share their towels with other student friends. 84% students trim their nails regularly and 16% trim their nails now and then. 58% students replied that they use hand kerchief while cough and sneezing. Further this table provides 84% use protected water and hundred percent eating healthy and balanced diet.

ANOVA

Parameters	Sample size	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Use hand Kerchief while cough and sneezing	100	5.098	2	2.549	12.837	.000
Cutting Nails Regularly	100	4.048	2	2.024	10.870	.000
Water container Clean and Covered	100	3.936	2	1.968	20.089	.000
Wash hands after toilet	100	8.033	2	4.016	27.042	.000
Head bath	100	26.201	3	8.734	29.368	.000

- From the table it can be inferred that hypothesis is accepted. Hence it can be said that Use hand Kerchief while cough and sneezing is having knowledge of personal hygiene that leads to healthy life.
- It can be said that hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that trimming nails proves students having awareness and knowledge about personal hygiene.
- From the table it can be inferred that hypothesis is accepted. Hence it can be said that closed water container provides protected water.
- From the table it can also be inferred that hypothesis is accepted. Hence it can be said that washing hands after toilet and doing head bath regularly are good habits to the students, it leads to maintaining personal hygiene and healthy life.

6. Discussion

Children are "agent of change" in pacing the behavior and practice of their family and community at large. The determinant of hygiene behaviours' of school children was inadequately studied in Warangal district. In this study, the analysis and interpretation of the findings by comparing the key hygiene behaviour outcomes among school children provided a better understanding of the factors that influence hygiene behaviours.

- Out of 100 schools going children 44 percent are in the age group of 15-16 yrs.
- Nearly 44 percent belong to backward class.
- out of 100 children 37 percent are pursuing class VII and 44 percent parents are illiterates.
- The hundred percent children do regular bath.

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- Nearly 91 percent children brush their teeth daily morning and they replied that they don't have any bad smell from their mouth.
- About 100 percent students practicing hand wash and 48 percent use soap for hand wash.
- It is learnt that hundred percent students are practicing hand wash before eating.
- 66 percent students replied that they wash hands after toilet.
- Nearly 85 percent students answered they are maintaining their clothes clean and neat.
- The hundred percent students learning personal hygiene education as part of their curriculum.
- 56 percent students out of 100 get awareness on personal hygiene issues from their teachers.
- It is also observed that 64 percent students share their combs with other students.
- About 84 percent students trim their nails regularly and 58 percent students used handkerchief at the time of cough and sneezing and,
- Nearly 84 percent students used protected water.

7. Conclusion

As a conclusion, the findings of this study illustrate that there is no relation between knowledge and personal hygiene practices in the public, even at the higher levels of education. In addition, it is vital to increase public awareness of personal hygiene practices, especially, among adolescent people in schools. Furthermore, it is crucial to increase the focus on the effects of media, which increases the level of knowledge at the community level, and encourage the personal hygiene behaviors in daily life routines among the Warangal district population. Future practical studies (depending on observation and collecting samples) are necessary to assess the actual practices, as well as further evaluation of public awareness of the personal hygiene.

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