



ISSN: 0975-833X

Available online at <http://www.journalcra.com>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF CURRENT RESEARCH

International Journal of Current Research
Vol. 12, Issue, 08, pp.13319-13321, August, 2020

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24941/ijcr.39384.08.2020>

RESEARCH ARTICLE

KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS ORAL HYGIENE PRACTICE AMONG SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 05th May, 2020
Received in revised form
27th June, 2020
Accepted 14th July, 2020
Published online 30th August, 2020

Key Words:

Oral Hygiene Practice, Attitude,
Behavior, Middle School Student.

ABSTRACT

Aim: The Study was done to assess the practices, knowledge, and attitude among Middle school students between 10–13 years toward Oral Health hygiene practice. **Materials and Methods:** A total of 200 school Students of between 10 -13 years were included in the study. A pre-structured self-administered questionnaire consisting of 10 questions were given to the school students to assess their knowledge and attitude towards Oral Hygiene practice. **Results:** All the student participants responded that, they brush their teeth once a day, 110(55%) of the Students brush twice a day. In regard to pattern of brushing 140 (70 %) of students responded that, they brush in horizontal direction and 103(51.5%) of students responded vertical direction pattern of brushing. When questioned about the use of mouthwash only 25(12.5%) of responded that, they use mouthwash along with tooth brushing. Among the school Students 170(85 %), 97(48.5 %), 60(30 %) and 50(25 %), were aware that improper oral hygiene would lead to Dental caries, plaque accumulation, halitosis and gum diseases. Majority of the students 180(90%) were aware that they need to visit a Dentist for their teeth related problems **Conclusion:** Findings confirmed that there is a positive awareness towards Oral Hygiene practice among Middle School Students, but barrier exist in awareness towards the ill effects of improper Oral hygiene.

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Citation: Dr. Evan. A. Clement, Dr. Vivek Kakkat and Dr. Dharmisha. 2020. "Knowledge and Attitudes towards Oral Hygiene Practices among School Students", *International Journal of Current Research*, 12, (08), 13319-13321.

INTRODUCTION

"Overall health and well-being" it had been outlined by the World Health Organization as "a state of being free from chronic mouth and facial pain, oral and throat cancer, oral infection and sores, periodontic (gum) illness, caries, tooth loss, associate degreed different diseases and disorders that limit an individual's capability in biting, chewing, smiling, speaking, and psychosocial welfare".¹ Decay don't seem to be solely inflicting pain, discomfort, sleeping, and issue in intake however additionally thought of to be one among the most common causes for absence from school/college, that consequently affects the academic performance of the kid, plus the psychological impact of those diseases on the standard of life. **Oral illness**, as calculable by the world burden of illness study,³ it is seen among ½ the world's population (3.58 billion people) in which decay (tooth decay) was found to be the foremost condition. Severe (Periodontal illness/periodontal diseases) was calculable to be the eleventh most current disease worldwide. The major cause for oral illness is considered to be, poor oral hygiene and inadequate exposure to halide, not

withstanding unhealthy diet high in free sugar, tobacco and harmful use of alcohol.⁴ Oral illness could be a major public unhealthiness with a high prevalence and incidence, particularly in developing countries.⁵ During the past twenty years, several industrialized countries have full-fledged decline in decay prevalence of kids and adolescents. The explanation for improved oral health might involve a lot of smart approach towards sugar consumption, improved oral hygiene, topical fluoride application, effective use of oral health services and school-based preventive program.^{6,7} So the aim of the present study was to assess the practices, knowledge, and attitude among middle school children between 10–13 years toward oral health hygiene practice

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A total of 200 Middle School Student between 10 - 13 years from Calicut District, Mayyannur Middle School of Kerala State was included in the study. A pre-structured self-administered questionnaire consisting of 10 questions were given to the children after the clinical examination to assess their practices, knowledge, and attitude toward their oral health hygiene. The questionnaire had three parts: First portion included the questions related to the demographic information of participants, such as age and gender. The second part of the questionnaire (Questions 1 to 5) was based on their routine

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practice towards Oral hygiene and, the third part of the questionnaire (Questions 6 to 10) was based on their awareness towards Oral hygiene practice. The survey data was collected and transferred into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets (Microsoft Inc., USA), and the data was tabulated and computed in percentage using SPSS software version 21.0 Chi-Square test was performed to calculate the frequency and percentage.

RESULTS

The attitude, knowledge among School Students towards Oral health practices was calculated and expressed in percentage (Table 1)

Table 1. The attitude, knowledge among School Students towards Oral health practices

		Yes	%	NO	%
1	Do you brush once a day	200	100	-	-
2	Do you brush twice a day	110	55	90	45
3	Do brush in horizontal direction	140	70	60	30
4	Do brush in vertical direction	103	51.5	97	48.5
5	Do you use mouthwash	25	12.5	175	87.5
6	Are you aware that improper oral hygiene would lead to Dental Caries	170	85	30	15
7	Are you aware that improper oral hygiene would lead to plaque accumulation	97	48.5	103	51.5
8	Are you aware that improper oral hygiene would lead to Halitosis (bad breath)	60	30	140	70
9	Are you aware that improper oral hygiene would lead to Gum Diseases	50	25	150	75
10	Are you aware that you need a Dentist for the teeth related problems	180	90	20	10

Note: Data are represented frequency and percentage.

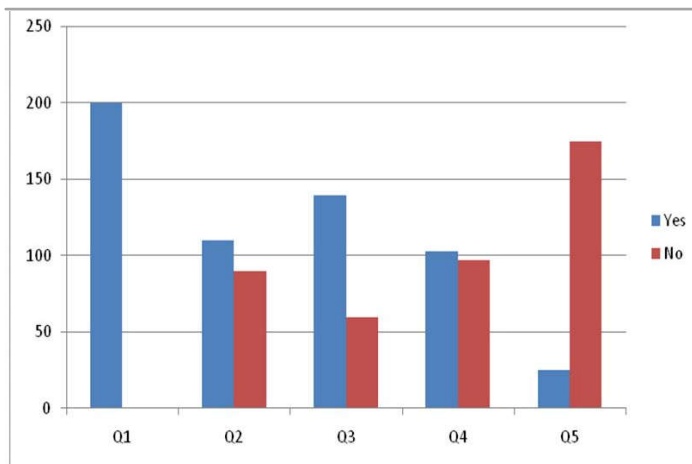


Figure 1. Bar diagram representing –Percentage of Routine practice towards Oral hygiene among Middle school students

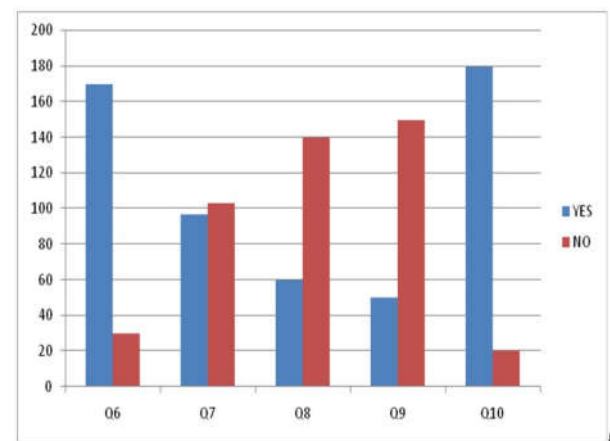


Figure 2. Bar diagram representing –Percentage of Awareness towards Oral hygiene among Middle school students

All the student participants responded that, they brush their teeth once a day, 110(55%) of the Students brush twice a day. In regard to pattern of brushing 140(70 %) of students responded that, they brush in horizontal direction and 103(51.5%) of students responded vertical direction pattern of brushing. When questioned about the use of mouthwash only 25(12.5%) of responded that, they use mouthwash along with tooth brushing (Figure 1) Among the school Students 170(85 %), 97(48.5 %), 60(30 %) and 50(25 %), were aware that improper oral hygiene would lead to Dental caries, plaque accumulation, halitosis and gum diseases. Majority of the students 180(90%) were aware that they need to visit a Dentist for their teeth related problems (Figure 2)

DISCUSSION

Good oral hygiene is the foundation of a healthy mouth and prevents 80% of all dental problems. Primary prevention through tooth brushing has paramount importance in the

prevention of dental health problems. Oral disease burden is higher among the poor population with an increase in developing countries.

The present study shows that most of the middle school students have a good knowledge and positive attitude toward oral hygiene, but they awareness towards usage of mouthwash was poor. Only 12% of students use mouthwash along with tooth brushing Majority of students knew that they have to visit a dentist for their teeth related problems. The study also revealed that the middle school students lack knowledge and awareness towards the ill effects of improper Oral hygiene.

To positively influence and improve the oral hygiene practices among students oral hygiene education programs could be included in the school curriculum and oral health promotion activities need to be carried out. Oral hygiene education programs should be conducted with reinforcement so that students can close the gap between knowledge and practice by using appropriate tools. There is a need to encourage students to take responsibility for their own oral hygiene. The schools may serve as the best platform for the promotion of oral health care among teenagers.

CONCLUSION

Findings confirmed that there is a positive awareness towards Oral Hygiene practice among Middle School Students, but barrier exist in awareness towards the ill effects of improper Oral hygiene. Oral hygiene education programs could be included in the school curriculum in order to promote and

educate students regarding oral hygiene practice, ill effects of improper oral hygiene and usage of appropriate tools for oral hygiene maintenance.

Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest

Funding: No funding was received for this study

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