

Knowledge and Practice about Personal Hygiene among Secondary School Children

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Abstract

Background: Personal hygiene deficiency has been found to be a serious public health problem and people often affected are school children. These have been attributed to inadequate knowledge of personal hygiene and its practices. Personal hygiene is the science of healthy livings and embraces all those day to day activities that contribute to health and wellbeing of an individual. The diseases that arise due to deficiency of personal hygiene remain one of the major public health concerns, particularly in developing countries.

Objective: To assess the level of knowledge and practice about personal hygiene among secondary school children.

Methods: This was a Descriptive type of cross-sectional study. It was conducted from July 2023 to September 2023. Data were collected using self-administered structured questionnaire consisting of information about socio-demographic data and information about knowledge and practice about personal hygiene. The data were processed by computer and statistical analysis of data was carried out by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). A total of 115 participants participated in the study.

Result: Result showed that among 115 respondents' majority were in class six and nine (28.7%). Most of the respondents were female (55.7%), 23.7% were 12 years old and all respondents were Muslim. 97.4% knew about the relation between personal hygiene and health. Most of them 97.4% take bath every day and 100.0% brush their teeth every day. 78.3% respondents clean hair regularly and most of them 86.1% cut nails every week. Majority 75.7% respondents have the idea about use of clean clothing/undergarments/bed sheets. More than half 60.9% students do not forget to wash hand before having meal/ after defecation. Majority 85.2% respon-

dents drink enough water daily (at least 1.5-2 liter) and most of them 99.1% have idea about the importance of pure drinking water. 93.9% respondents have regular habit of passing stool and urine. Majority 94.8% respondents have the knowledge to take enough vegetables, fruits, water regularly to avoid health problems and 77.4% knew that holding back urine can cause urinary tract infection and holding back of stool can cause constipation.

Conclusion: Personal hygiene is not an isolated behavior; instead it varies from person to person according to different factors. Intervention programs raising the awareness and importance of personal hygiene among school children through coordinated education measures by parents, teachers and media will be helpful to impart these early in life. Attention should be given for the monitoring and evaluating personal hygiene practices among children.

Keywords: Knowledge; practice; personal hygiene

Introduction

In medicine, hygiene practices are employed as preventative measures to reduce the incidence and spreading of disease. Other uses of the term appear in phrases including: body hygiene, mental hygiene, domestic hygiene, dental hygiene, and occupational hygiene, used in connection with public health [1]. Body hygiene pertains to hygiene practices performed by an individual to care for one's bodily health and well-being, through cleanliness. Motivations for personal hygiene practice include reduction of personal illness, healing from personal illness, optimal health and sense of well-being, social acceptance and prevention of spread of illness to others [2]. Personal hygiene can be controlled by sustaining high standards of personal care and humans have been aware of the importance of hygiene for thousands of years [3].

These practices are fundamental to the prevention of many diseases; especially contagious diseases [4]. Some basic personal hygiene are as follows; Toilet hygiene: Wash your hands after you use the restroom, shower hygiene :Personal preference may dictate how often you wish to shower, but most people will benefit from a rinse at least every other day, nail hygiene, teeth hygiene, sickness hygiene, hand hygiene [5]. Majority of health problems affecting children like diarrheal disease, skin disease, worm infestation and dental disease are preventable by promotion of hygienic practices through proper health education by the teachers, who are the first contact in schools as school children are vulnerable to neglect of basic personal hygiene [6]. In Africa and South Asia, it has been reported that 62% and 31% of all death respectively are due to infectious disease. According to WHO 3.8 million children under five year die from diarrhea and acute respiratory tract infection per year. Out of total diarrheal death 88% death were estimated due to unsafe water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene [7]. Poor hygiene can also cause social rejection and may also lead to bullying, low confidence and low self-esteem [8]. A person's mental health can also affect how they take care of themselves [9]. Integrated approach by parents, school and social media to enhance hygiene practices could be useful.

Materials and Methods

This was a descriptive type of cross-sectional study regarding knowledge and practice about personal hygiene among secondary school children. It was conducted from July 2023 to September 2023. The study was carried out among the respondent of Hazi M.A. Gofur Secondary School, Amulia, Dhaka. Study population was Secondary school student. A total of 115 respondents were selected. Data were collected using self-administered structured questionnaire consisting of information about socio-demographic data and information about knowledge and practice about personal hygiene. After collection of data it was checked, verified and edited to reduce inconsistency. The data were processed by computer and statistical analysis of data was carried out by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science).

Result

Class	Frequency(n)	Percent (%)
Class VI	33	28.7
Class VII	15	13.0
Class VIII	23	20.0
Class IX	33	28.7
Class X	11	9.6
Total	115	100.0

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their class (n=115).

Table-1 shows that among the total 115 respondents, the majority 33 (28.7%) were in class 6 and class 9.

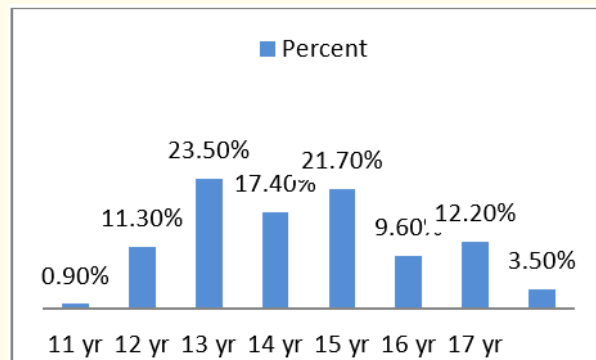


Figure 1: Distribution of the respondents according to age (n=115).

Figure-1 show that among the total 115 respondents, majority 27(23.5%) were 12 years old and very few 1(.9%) were 10 years old.

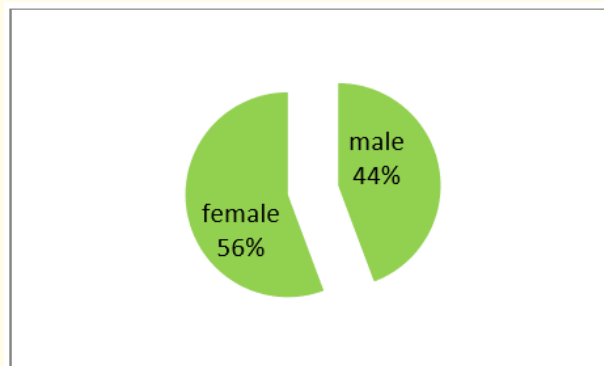


Figure 2: Distribution of the respondent according to sex (n=115).

Figure-2 shows that among the total 115 respondents, 55.7% were female and 44.3% were male.

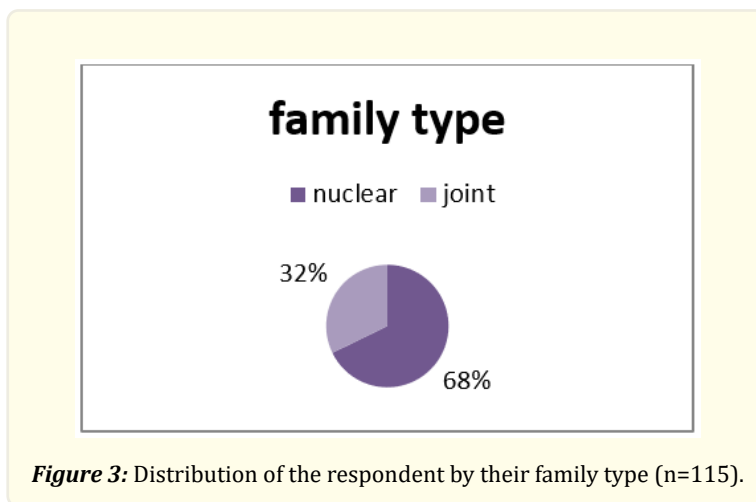


Figure-3 shows that more than half 78(67.8%) respondents were lived in nuclear family.

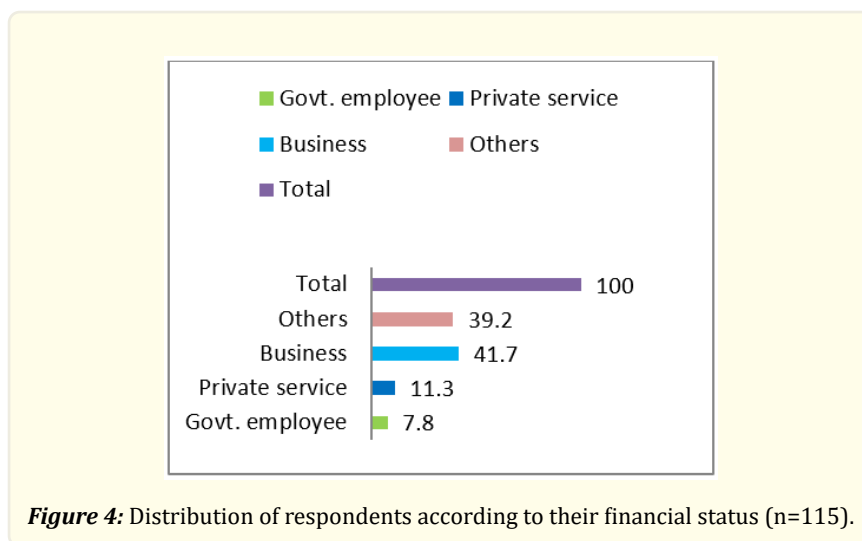


Figure-4 shows that out of 115 respondents, most of 48(41.7%) respondent's parents were businessman and very few 9(7.8%) parents were involved in government job.

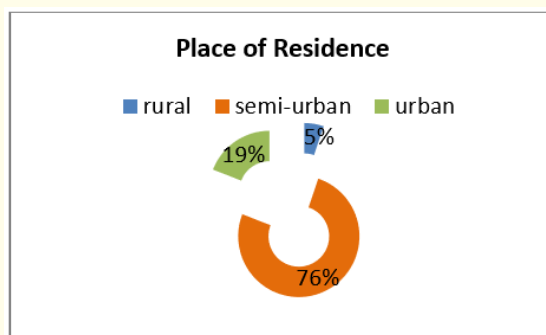


Figure 5: Distribution of respondents according to their place of residence (n=115).

Figure-5 shows that more than half 87(75.7%) respondents were lived in semi-urban area.

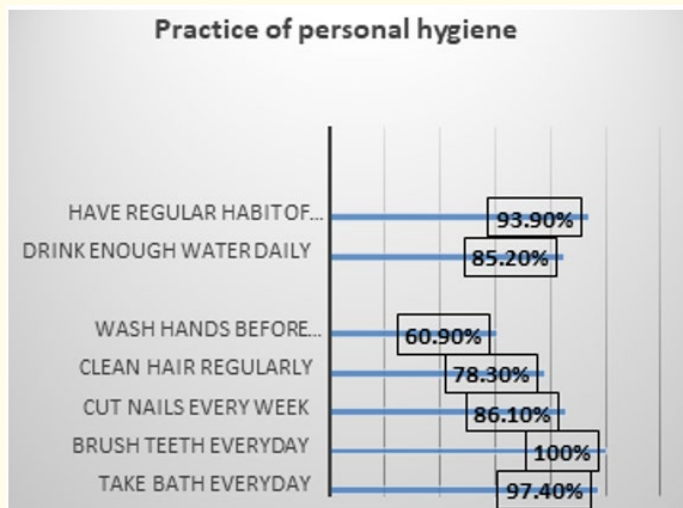


Figure 6: Distribution of respondents according to their practice about personal hygiene (n=115).

Figure-6 shows that out of 115 respondents 97.4% students take bath every day, 100.0% brush their teeth every day, most of them 86.1% cut nails every week. Majority 78.3% clean hair regularly. 60.9% students do not forget to wash hand before having meal/after defecation. 85.2% respondents drink enough water daily (93.9% respondents have regular habit of passing stool and urine).

Knowledge about personal hygiene	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Idea about the relation between personal hygiene & health	112	97.4%
Idea about to use of clean clothing/undergarments/bed sheets	87	75.7%
Have idea about the importance of pure drinking water	114	99.1%
Knowledge to have enough vegetables, fruits, water to avoid health problems	109	94.8%
Idea about urinary tract infection & constipation	89	77.4%

Table 2

Table-2 shows that out of 115 respondents, majority 112(97.4%) knew about the relation between personal hygiene and health. 75.7% have the idea about use of clean clothing/undergarments/bed-sheets. 99.1% have idea about the importance of pure drinking water. 94.8% respondents have the Knowledge to take enough vegetables, fruits, water regularly to avoid health problems. Most of the respondents 77.4% knew that holding back urine can cause urinary tract infection and holding back of stool can cause constipation.

Discussion

In this cross-sectional study, all of the respondents gave quality feedback about the knowledge and practice about personal hygiene. In this study, 28.7% respondents were from class 6 and 9. Majority respondents were 12 years old (23.5.0%) which is similar to an UNICEF study where 24% respondents were from 12 years old [10] and most of them were female (55.7.0%). Regarding religion, all of the respondents were Muslim (100.0%). This is consistent with our national context. In terms of socio-economic status, majority respondents were belonged to nuclear family (67.8%). 41.7% respondent's parents were involved in business and regarding place of residence, more than half respondents were lived in semi-urban area which is about 75.7%. It was observed that, 97.4% knew about the relation between personal hygiene and health. Most of them 97.4% take bath every day and 100.0% brush their teeth every day. 78.3% respondents clean hair regularly and most of them 86.1% cut nails every week. 75.7% respondents have the idea about use of clean clothing/undergarments/bed sheets. Study shows that, more than half 60.9% students do not forget to wash hand before having meal/ after defecation which is similar to a study done in Bogura Govt. Pilot High School where 65% students practice washing hands properly before meal or after defecation [11]. 73.0% students have vegetables/fruits in their everyday meal. Majority 85.2% respondents drink enough water daily (at least 1.5-2 liter). According to study findings, most of them 99.1% have idea about the importance of pure drinking water. 93.9% respondents have regular habit of passing stool and urine. Majority 94.8% respondents have the knowledge to take enough vegetables, fruits, water regularly and most of the respondents 77.4% knew that holding back urine can cause urinary tract infection and holding back of stool can cause constipation. Initiating proper motivation and self- interest among the students to maintain health and hygiene practice is thus the vital investment, for them and for healthier society in tomorrow. The outcomes of this study might be helpful for future intervention planning in practice of personal hygiene among students.

Conclusion

The educational authorities in the country can develop and adopt policies and guidelines that will make way to have adequate access to resources, items and opportunities to maintain hygiene at school and home. Schools should provide hygiene education from early grade school children to supplement the training provided by parents and guardians, to ensure that all children learn at an appropriate age how to protect themselves and others from preventable exposure to illness and other hygienic hazards.

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