

Knowledge and attitudes of pupils in some of primary schools regarding personal hygiene in Erbil city

Dr.Nazar Ali.Sheren Dr.Kareem F.Aziz Dr.Salih A Abdulla

Hawler medical University/ college of Nursing

Medical Institute/Hawler

الخلاصة:

الهدف: معلومات طلاب المدارس الابتدائية تجاه النظافة الشخصية في اربيل

- **المنهجية:** شملت العينة ١٠٠ طالب من بعض المدارس الابتدائية في اربيل وقد شملت أداة البحث استبياناً عن العوامل الديموغرافية للطلاب والمعلومات والتوجهات لديهم حول النظافة الشخصية وقد اجريت الدراسة للفترة من ٢٠ كانون الثاني الى ٢٠ من شهر نيسان من عام ٢٠١١.
- **النتائج:** أظهرت نتائج البحث أنّ اغلب الطلاب كانت لديهم معلومات عن النظافة الشخصية وكانت متمركزة بشكل كبير على أهميتها في الوقاية من الامراض والحفاظ على المظهر الخارجي وكانوا يعتقدون بان نظافة الملابس من اهم المقومات في النظافة الشخصية وان الامراض بشكل عام هي من المخاطر المهمة لعدم الاعتناء بالنظافة الشخصية وكانوا يرغبون في الحصول على معلومات اكبر عن ماهية النظافة الشخصية وكيفية تطبيقها وكان العمر من احد الاسباب في الاستجابة الايجابية لبعض الفقرات والتي تتعلق بالنظافة الشخصية وبعض الامراض المعدية ولكن لم يكون للعمر تأثير على العوامل المتعلقة بغسل الاسنان وغسل اليدين قبل اوبعد الاكل. والجنس كان له علاقة ايضا ببعض المعلومات والمتعلقة بلامراض المعدية
- **التوصيات:** أوصت الدراسة بضرورة اجراء التنقيف الصحي للطلاب حول اهمية النظافة الشخصية وان يكون للمعلمين دورا لذلك من خلال ادخالهم بدورات خاصة في هذا المجال واجراء تنسيق بين ادارات المدارس وبعض المراكز الصحية حول تلبية احتياجات المدارس من معلومات حول هذا الموضوع ويجب ان يتوفر للطلاب في المدارس مكانات جيدة لممارسة وتطبيق النظافة الشخصية من خلال تامين حمامات نظيفة وغيرها لتامين غسل اليدين للطلاب والحفاظ على نظافتهم الشخصية

Introduction:

Hygiene is an old concept related to medicine awareness to personal and professional care practices related to most aspects of living. Inadequate sanitary conditions and poor hygiene practices play major roles in the increased burden of communicable disease within the developing countries ⁽¹⁾. Previous hand hygiene studies have indicated that children with proper hand washing practices are less likely to report gastrointestinal and respiratory symptoms ⁽²⁾. Schools should provide for hygiene education to kindergarten and 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. Hand washing with soap has been reported to reduce diarrhea morbidity by 44% and respiratory infection by 23 % ⁽³⁾. A study reported that

17% of participants washed their hands with soap after toilet, while 45% used only water⁽⁴⁾. In addition to having proper resources and facilities hygiene practices are heavily influenced by pupil's knowledge and attitudes towards hygiene⁽⁵⁾. Hygiene in school, home, and every day life settings plays an important part in preventing spread of infectious diseases⁽⁶⁾. Beginning in the early nineteenth century the repeated onslaught of diseases such as cholera begins to alter people's understanding of personal hygiene.

Hygiene practices are preventive measures to reduce the incidence and spreading of disease and are parts of good personal grooming⁽⁷⁾. Hygiene as a system included not only personal hygiene related to food, clothing and exercise but also sciences such as engineering, bacteriology, public sanitation and waterworks⁽⁸⁾. School teachers are considered the major source of information for their students and would appear to be suitable as health educators. School teachers are expected to be role models so that students can emulate and adopt their behavior and attitudes⁹.

Objective:

To identify the student's knowledge and attitudes regarding personal hygiene.

Materials and Methods:

A descriptive study was carried out; one hundred of pupils were involved in some of the primary schools in Erbil city. The study began in Jan 20, 2011, through Apr 20, 2011. Questionnaire was designed for data collection and viewed to 10 experts in nursing field for validity and the questionnaire was consisted of two main parts as below.

Part one: socio demographic characteristics for study sample.

Part two: questions related to knowledge and attitudes about personal hygiene.

The Data was analyzed using the statistical packages for the social science SPSS version 11.5.

Results:

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of study sample

It shows that the majority of them were female, and their age were over 10 years which represents (44%) of the sample.

Gender	No. (%)
Male	45
Female	55
Age	No. (%)
6-7	21
8-9	35
10+	44

Table 2: Applying healthy measures

The result reveals that the majority of them were wash their teeth and hands

Do you wash your teeth every morning	No. (%)
Yes	87
No	13
Do you wash your hands before and after meals	No. (%)
Yes	70
No	30

Table 3: knowledge of student regarding personal hygiene

It shows that (94%) of students knows the requirement of personal hygiene, the majority of them also knows that importance of hand washing as for disease prevention and for good appearance, the result also reveals that (60%) of them believed that clean cloths is important indicator for healthy individual and (56%) of them believed that disease are the most important risk factor for improper personal hygiene and they wanted to have more health education about it

Do you know requirements for the personal hygiene	No. (%)
Yes	94
No	6
Do you know requirements for the hand washing	
Yes	71
No	29
What are these requirement	
Water	55
Soap	15
Gel	1
Do you know importance of hand washing	
Yes	83
No	17
What are these importance of hand washing	
Disease prevention	60
good appearance	23
Do you know the importance points that must be present in healthy individual	
Yes	70
No	30
What are these importance present in healthy individual	
Good appearance	58
Clean cloths	9
Dental cleanness	1
Cut nail	2
When you usually wash your hands	
Before Eating	20
After Eating	55
After Visiting toilet	60
During coughing and sneezing	2
Reason for washing hands and teeth	
Parents request	80
I don't know	20
Is there any relationship between personal hygiene and infectious disease	
Yes	63
No	37
Do you know the risks for health if not apply healthy practice to achieve	

their personal hygiene	
Yes	56
No	44
What are these risky for health	
Diseases	56
Do you have the desire to study a health related subjects in your studying	
Yes	72
No	28
What do you like to study	
personal hygiene	62
disease prevention	41
anatomy	5
dental care	4

Table 4: Do you know requirements for the personal hygiene

It shows that there was relationship between age and their knowledge about personal hygiene

Age categories	Answers		P
	Yes No. (%)	No No. (%)	
6-7	17	4	0.010
8-9	33	2	
10+	44	0	

Table 5: Do you wash your teeth every morning

It reveals that age have no effect of their daily brushing their teeth

Age categories	Answers		P
	Yes No. (%)	No No. (%)	
6-7	15	6	0.058
8-9	32	3	
10+	40	4	

Table 6: Do you wash your hands before and after meals

It shows that age have no effect on washing hands before and after meals

Age categories	Answers		P
	Yes No. (%)	No No. (%)	
6-7	19	2	0.569
8-9	34	1	
10+	41	3	

Table 7: Is there any relationship between personal hygiene and infectious disease?

The result reveals that age have significant indicator on their knowledge about infectious disease and personal hygiene

Age categories	Answers		P
	Yes No. (%)	No No. (%)	
6-7	6	14	0.0001
8-9	21	14	
10+	36	6	

Table 8: Does you know the importance points that must be present in healthy individual?

It shows that the age have certain effect on their knowledge about criteria of healthy individual

Age categories	Answers		P
	Yes No. (%)	No No. (%)	
6-7	10	10	0.0001
8-9	20	15	
10+	41	1	

Discussion:

The findings of the study revealed that the majority of student were knows the requirement, and the importance of personal hygiene in preventing disease and infection as shown in (Table 3),this indicate that the student get good information about these factors from school and family as sources of acquiring knowledge and information. Another study supported findings in that all children said that their parents instructed them to wash their hands, prompted them to wash their hands, this supports the principle that health education should be included in the curriculum of grades 1 through 12 and continued in the community through adult education program ⁽¹⁰⁾. Overall, the majority of students reported washing hands before meals. The percentages of children who reported the importance of and the preference for hand washing before eating were 99.7% and 98.8%, respectively⁽¹¹⁾.

The result also reveals that the student knows the importance of healthy individual through the indicator of clean cloths good appearance as factors contributed for healthy pupils, a study conducted in East London showed that intensive hand hygiene interventions and caring of good appearance are feasible and acceptable but only temporarily during a period of a particular health threat such as an influenza pandemic ⁽¹²⁾. The majority of student believed that they need more health education about personal hygiene as important indicator for good personal knowledge, 'Knowledge about the importance of Hygiene makes children more aware of other people around them ⁽¹³⁾. and this also

supported by a study which reveals that schools should provide for hygiene education to 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⁽¹⁰⁾. Table (4) shows that there was significant relationship between age and their knowledge about personal at p value(0.010), this findings is similar to study that shows children of all age groups had good knowledge of hygiene practices and germ transmission⁽¹¹⁾. In the other study of school children grades 6-12 year, we assessed the knowledge, attitudes and practices of hygiene. Of the Students surveyed, 52% were classified as having proper knowledge of hygiene⁽¹¹⁾. The age shows no significant relation with washing teeth, and washing hands before and after meals (Table 5, and 6).this mainly because the majority of them were washing their hands and teeth according to the request of their parents, overall our findings are consistent with previous studies that have documented knowledge and practices of hygiene among school children in developing countries⁽¹²⁾. For instance, studies from the Philippines and Colombia indicated that 75.9% and 46.9%of students, respectively, reported washing hands before meals.

Table (7) result reveals that age have significant indicator on their knowledge about infectious disease and personal hygiene as many of them heard that from teacher as part of their lessons in science and continuing education in their school. It was found that students with adequate knowledge of fecal-oral contamination is a major cause of transmissible diseases such as gastrointestinal infections are less likely to have prevalent parasitic infections⁽¹²⁾.Our study also reveals that age have certain effect on their knowledge about criteria of healthy individual, as person become older his insight about health and disease are increased (Table 8). These findings are in concurrence with a study conducted in the Philippines which found that 65% of students reported good bathing, and general hygiene related to their age⁽¹³⁾.

Conclusions:

The study concluded that:

- The majority of student were washing their teeth and hands, they knows the requirement of personal hygiene, their knowledge about the importance of hand washing were focused on it helps for disease prevention and for good appearance only.

- The student believed that clean cloths is important indicator for healthy individual, and disease are the most important risk factor for improper personal hygiene and they wanted to have more health education about personal hygiene and disease prevention.
- Age was significant factor for their responses about knowledge of personal hygiene in some factors related to personal hygiene, and knowledge of infectious disease, while it have no significant on their daily brushing their teeth and washing hands before and after meals.
- Gender has only effect on their knowledge about personal hygiene and infectious disease

Recommendations:

1. Health education must be done for students in all primary schools about personal hygiene and disease prevention.
2. All teacher science in primary schools must be trained on how they do health education for pupils.
3. Organize relationships between school health program and school administrations to provide personal hygiene needs to these schools.
4. There must be coordination between school administrations and pupil's family to achieve public hygiene among pupils in their schools.
5. All children should have access to items and opportunities to maintain personal hygiene in school settings

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