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Knowledge, Perception and Practicesof Personal Hygiene among Students of Adamawa State College of Agriculture, Ganye

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Abstract

This study sought to describe students' knowledge, perceptions and practices, of personal hygiene in Adamawa state college of Agriculture Ganye. Data were collected using questionnaire consisting of 12 questions used as the instrument. Some questions and discussions were hold orally; Fifty (50) questionnaires were completed assessing demographics, personal hygiene behaviors, perceptions and knowledge about hygiene. The results shows washing hands after using the toilet and before meals were more frequent than after returning home, or visiting public places. The main and predominant reason for which students don't wash their hands was because they always forget. The situations when students consider it important to wash hands were after using the toilet and before the meals. Students were unable to name at least 1 illness transmitted by dirty hands but, less than 50% of students knows that illnesses were transmitted by dirty hands.Students who are not fully satisfied, with the toilet and bath room for the main reasons were: unpleasant smell in toilet rooms (52%), absence of hand hygiene equipment (49%) and lack of cleanliness (38%). only 50% of respondents mention washing their hands always or often using school toilet. Waste bins in girls' toilets for safe disposal of sanitary towels were not provided in the schools at all times. Conclusion the hygiene habits of college students may be motivated by perceptions of socially acceptable behavior rather than scientific knowledge. Interventions targeting the social norms of incoming and continuing students may be effective in improving hygiene behaviors and ultimately hygiene practices.

KEYWORDS: Knowledge, Perceptions, Practice, Personal Hygiene, Adamawa State College of Agriculture, Ganye

INTRODUCTION

Personal hygiene (PH) canbe described as the principle of maintaining cleanliness and grooming of the external body (Johnson, 2015). Personal Hygiene refers to all activities, actions and practices carried out by an individual to keep the body clean and healthy. There are so many benefits attached to personal hygiene such as prevention of diseases, quick recovery from illnesses, social acceptance by people, emotional satisfaction and good personal appearance. Personal Hygiene is the first step to grooming good health and this involves all measures taken by individuals to preserve his or her health (Johnson, 2015). Improved standard of hygiene will prevent health problems like dandruff, athletes foot, body odour, pin worms, excessive ear wax, gastro-intestinal diseases (Web Health Centre, 2015).

Good grooming implies decent clothing, well-kept hair, clean teeth, fresh breadth, clean skin, and well-manicured nails. All these minute details about a person‘s body add up to his level of physical health and sense of well-being. Good looks are usually the result of great care and attention paid to personal hygiene. There are some materials that people generally share with others which may be detrimental to health; such materials include hair clippers, manicure and pedicure kits. It is important for students to be aware of this and take necessary precautions. Engaging in some very basic PH measures could help prevent coughs and colds from being passed from person to person. Social aspects could be affected, as many people will choose to avoid someone who has bad PH than tell him/her how to improve (Hygiene Expert, 2015).

There is the need to get information on the areas where the adolescents are having problems with their PH. Some students are involved in bad habits like nail biting, sneezing without covering their mouth, washing hands only with water after leaving the toilet and cleaning their ears with hair pins. There is dearth of information on the present facilities that will make the students observe their personal hygiene properly (The Nigerian Child, 2007).

Not many studies have been carried out holistically on the personal hygiene practice of students in Nigeria; this research work is therefore designed to focus on the knowledge, perceptions and practices of personal hygiene among students of college of Agriculture Ganye Adamawa state- Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Data were collected using questionnaire consisting of 12 questions was developed and used as the instrument. Some question and discussions were hold orally with some of these students, but some felt so shy to discuss such matters.

Method of Data Analysis

Simple percentages were used in analyzing the data collected. The formula

$$\text{Frequency} = \frac{\text{No. of responses}}{\text{No. of population}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Distribution According to Age

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
<20yrs	8	16
20 -25yrs	18	36
25 -30yrs	19	38
>30yrs	5	10
Total	50	100

The data given on table 1 shows distribution of respondent according to age range from <20years to >30years shows that most of the respondent belongs to 25-30 years (38%) followed by 20-25 years group which has (36%)

Table 2: Distribution of respondents According to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	34
Female	33	66
Total	50	100

The data given on table 2 shows that the distribution of respondent according to sex. The female respondents have 66% while that of the males was 52.7%, this reveal that most of the respondents are female students

Table 3: Do you wash your hands before meals and preparing meals?

Response	Number of respondents	percentage %
Always	35	72.9
Fairly	3	6.3
Sometimes	7	14.6
Never	3	6.3
Total	48	100.0

The data given on table 3 shows 72.9% wash hands before preparing meals more frequent than when in contact with a pet or a sick person, or visiting public places.

Table 4: Do you wash your hands after using the toilet?

Response	Number of respondents	percentage %
Always	41	85.4
Sometimes	3	6.3
Never	4	8.3
Total	48	100.0

The data given on table 4 shows that the most situations when students consider it necessary to wash hands are after using the toilet as shown in the table 85.4% washes hands after using the toilet

Table 5: Do you use soap to wash your hands?

Response	Number of respondents	percentage %
Sometimes	13	27.1
Only when available	27	56.3
Always	8	16.7
Total	48	100.0

The data given on table 5 shows that 56.3% of Student tends to use soap when soap its available.

Table 6: for what reasons you do not wash your hands?

Response	Number of respondents	percentage %
I forget about it	26	54.2
I do not understand why	10	20.8
There is no water	12	25.0
Total	48	100.0

The data given on table 6 shows the reason why respondents do not wash hands 54.2% forget to wash their hand always this reveals that the main and predominant reason for which students don't wash their hands is because they forget.

Table 7: in what kind of situations do you consider washing hands as necessary?

Response	Number of respondents	percentage %
After using a toilet	24	50.0
After coming back home	5	10.4
Before meals or preparing	19	39.6
a meals	48	100.0
Total		

The data given on table 7 shows the situation when washing hands are considered necessary 50% wash hands after using the toilet these reveal that washing hands after using the toilet is more frequent than before preparing meals, after returning home and being in contact with a pet or a sick person, or visiting public places which means that washing hands after using the toilet is considered the necessary situation.

Table 8: Do you know what illness can be transmitted by dirty hands

Response	Number of respondents	percentage %
Yes	33	68.8
No	15	31.3
Total	48	100.0

The data on table 8 shows the respondents knowledge of the diseases transmitted by dirty hands, 68.8% of the respondents knows that dirty hands transmit diseases but, 31.3% of respondents did not know that illnesses is transmitted by dirty hands

Table 9: Have you been taught proper hand hygiene practices by any organization?

Response	Number of respondents	percentage %
Yes	26	54.2
No	22	45.8
Total	48	100.0

Table 9 shows the data on level of the knowledge of respondents on personal hygiene. Very few of the respondents (45.8%) had poor knowledge on personal hygiene, while (54.2%) had fair and good knowledge

Table 10: Do you use the school toilet?

Response	Number of respondents	percentage %
Yes, regularly	23	47.9
Yes, sometimes	25	52.1
Total	48	100.0

Table 10 shows that Less than 47.9% of respondents use the toilet in schools regularly. Most of the respondents 52% use it sometimes or only when absolutely necessary.

Table 11: is water being provided in the school toilets?

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage %
Always	22	45.8
Sometimes	16	33.3
Never	10	20.8
Total	48	100.0

Table 11 shows data which reveals that 45.8% water is been provided in the school toilet while 33% says sometimes and 29 % indicates no water

Table 12 Are waste bins being provided in girls toilets for safe disposal?

Response	Number of respondents	percentage %
Always	8	16.7
Fair often	3	6.3
Sometimes	27	56.3
Never	10	20.8
Total	48	100.0

Table 12 shows data indicating whether waste bin is been provided and disposed well or not 56% of the respondent states that sometimes while 20% disagree that waste bin were not provided

LIST OF FINDINGS

I. Most of the respondent belongs to the age group of 25-35 years and are mostly female students
II. Students in college tend to use soap when they wash hands in most of the cases when soap is available.
III. Washing hands after using the toilet and before meals is more frequent than after returning home, being in contact with a pet or a sick person, or visiting public places.
IV. The main and predominant reason for which students don't wash their hands is because they forget.
V. Most of the respondent admitted the fact that dirty hands transmit diseases but, were unable to name an illness transmitted by dirty hands

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Certain personal hygiene behaviors appeared to be universally strong among study participants, with the vast majority (56.3%) of respondents stating that they wash their handswith soap "always" after using the toilet. Despite this, other behaviors i.e, hand washing prior to eating a meal or after touching an animal was fairly reported by study subjects.

Consistent with previous research, women noted better personal hygiene than men. Anderson JL *et al*., (2008)Similar to their reported behavior, women defined hand washing as "very important" more often as men.As with the personal hygiene measures noted above, (34%)of men reported worse household hygiene habits compared with women.

68% of study participants were convinced that hand-washing could prevent the transmission of diseases only 31.3% believed it could not prevent the transmission of other diseases. Taken together, these data suggest that many college Agriculture students "believe" that hand washing is important without being fully cognizant of the scientific reasons for its application a significant proportion of participants (40.9%) stated that they clean their room more frequently when their roommate is sick, suggesting "motivated" or "planned" behavior with the intent of reducing transmission of infection or improving health

Our study failed to show an association between reported hygiene behaviors and health outcomes. Because reviews has shown a conclusive relationship between hand hygiene and decreased incidence of upper respiratory infections and gastroenteritis.

SUMMARY

Students in schools tend to use soap when they wash hands in most of the cases when soap is available. Washing hands after using the toilet and before meals is more frequent than after returning home, being in contact with a pet or a sick person, or visiting public places. The main and predominant reason for which students don't wash their hands is because they forget. The situations when students consider it important to wash hands are after using the toilet and before the meals. Students were unable to name at least 1 illness transmitted by dirty hands but, less than 50% of students knows that illnesses are transmitted by dirty hands.(52%), of Students are not fully satisfied, with the toilet and bath room for the main reasons of unpleasant smell in toilet rooms and absence of hand hygiene equipment (49%) and lack of cleanliness (38%). only 50% of respondents mention washing their hands always or often after using school toilet. Waste bins in girls' toilets for safe disposal of sanitary towels are not provided in the schools at all times.

CONCLUSIONS

Our findings show that only less than 30% of students between 20 and 25 years of age use the school toilets regularly others use the toilet only when absolutely necessary. The study reflected that school toilets are stinky, cold, horrible, offensive, disgusting and without clean running water, provided and without waste bins in girls' toilets for safe disposal of sanitary towels. Disease spreads quickly in cramped spaces where hand-washing facilities or soap are not available, and where toilets are in disrepair.

Considering all the above, it is fair to suggest that access to basic water and sanitation services in schools is still a concern in Adamawa state college of Agriculture Ganye. Most of the times, this problem is overseen and not given the priority it deserves.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study shows that students tend to be forgetful of certain practices and information, such as washing hands and negative consequences that could follow from not doing so. There is space for intervention with practical activities and/or group activities beyond talking about it as part of the curriculum. Encourage continuation of the important work on WASH in schools under the Protocol on Water and Health and advocate for considering this area as a key priority for the 2017–2019 program of work.

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