

Predictors of oral hygiene practices among primary school children of Alzintan City, Libya

ABSTRACT

Background: Good oral health is essential for the well-being and development of young children. Preservation of good oral hygiene in children is important for the development of strong, healthy teeth and to decrease the possibility of dental caries. Oral health is maintained by regular eating and drinking, as well as daily mechanical and pharmacological cleaning of the mouth, for example, brushing teeth with fluoride toothpaste and flossing. The aim of the study is to determine oral hygiene practices among public primary school children in Al Zintan City, Libya.

Methodology: A cross sectional study was conducted in three public primary schools in Al Zintan City, Libya. A total of 100 school children aged 9-12 years old participated in the study. Random sampling method was used.

Result: Response rate was 92%. There was 53.3% of respondents who had correct practices on oral hygiene, and 46.7% of respondents had incorrect practices on oral hygiene. It was observed that statistically significant association was found between oral hygiene practices and different age groups of respondents ($P = 0.04$). There was no significant association between oral hygiene practices and other socio demographic characteristics ($P > 0.05$). No statistically significant association regarding oral hygiene practices between children with high and low knowledge, good and bad dietary habits, positive and negative dental history ($P > 0.05$). Oral hygiene practices are significantly associated with attitude toward oral hygiene among primary school children of Al Zintan City, Libya ($P < 0.01$).

Conclusion: Correct oral hygiene practices is better among school children of older age. In addition, school children whose father had higher education level have correct oral hygiene practices. Attitude towards oral hygiene is one of the important predictors of oral hygiene practices.

Keyword: Oral hygiene practices; Associate factors; School children