



## Comparison of Hygienic Practices among 5-6 Year Boys and Girls of NDMC Schools

Lalita Verma<sup>1</sup>, Prachi Mishra<sup>2</sup> & Dimple Rangila<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty, Department of Food and Nutrition, Lady Irwin College, New Delhi, India.

<sup>2</sup>Faculty, Department of Food and Nutrition, Lady Irwin College, New Delhi, India.

<sup>3</sup>Faculty, Department of Human development and child studies, Lady Irwin College, New Delhi, India.

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### Abstract

India is a developing country. Children are future of any country. Interventions in schools regarding hygienic practices should be must. Then only the school based hygienic interventions can be maintained. In schools, the hygienic practices should be followed as a routine work then only children can develop properly. Early childhood is very important phase of the life. Hygienic practices have an important public health issue because its impact is on children's health, growth and development. The objective of this study was to assess the hygienic practices in 5-6 years children. A cross-sectional survey was undertaken on 2016 (61 boys and 66 girls) children aged 5-6years from a random sample of preschoolers in New Delhi, India. A pilot study was done on sub sample questions like mothers' practices regarding hygiene and oral sanitation practices. Frequencies were used for statistical analysis.

**Keywords:** Cleanliness, Teachers, Washing, Practices, NDMC, Lavatory.

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### Introduction

India is a developing country. Children are future of any country. Interventions in schools regarding hygienic practices should be must. Then only the school based hygienic interventions can be maintained. In schools, the hygienic practices should be followed as a routine work then only children can develop properly. Early childhood is very important phase of the life. Hygienic practices have an important public health issue because its impact is on children's health, growth and development. In order to secure child's healthy growth and development, having a healthy nutrition and maintaining a desirable level of physical activities are not enough only by themselves. Following rules of hygiene is also required, so that the likelihood of kids getting sick is limited. In many studies it has been proven that frequent hand-washing is an effective way to protect children from infectious diseases, since spreading of diseases at school becomes limited in this way. In many studies showed that unhealthy habits are related to low socio-economic level of family. Socio-economic differences in mortality and morbidity rates across the world have received its due attention in the recent years. Many studies have showed poverty as an important determinant of malnutrition especially in developing

countries that conserves into intergenerational transfer of poor nutritional status among children and intercepts equity and social development.

### Objectives

- To observe hygienic practices preschoolers
- To elicit gender differences of hygienic practices
- To observe faulty hygienic practices among children

### Material and Method

Ethics approval. The study was approved by Ethical Committee of Department of Home Science, University of Delhi.

### Study design

Participants of this study were mothers of children studying in class- I<sup>st</sup>. Schools were selected using purposive sampling. A total of 2 schools were selected. The study was conducted in selected NDMC government schools of New Delhi. All students of class first visited regularly one week. A written consent was taken from all the mothers who agreed to be the part of the study. A school based cross sectional study was undertaken to observe hygienic practices.

### Correspondence

Lalita Verma

E-mail: lalitaverma@gmail.com, Ph. +9199101 05025

**Figure I.** Brushing practices among children

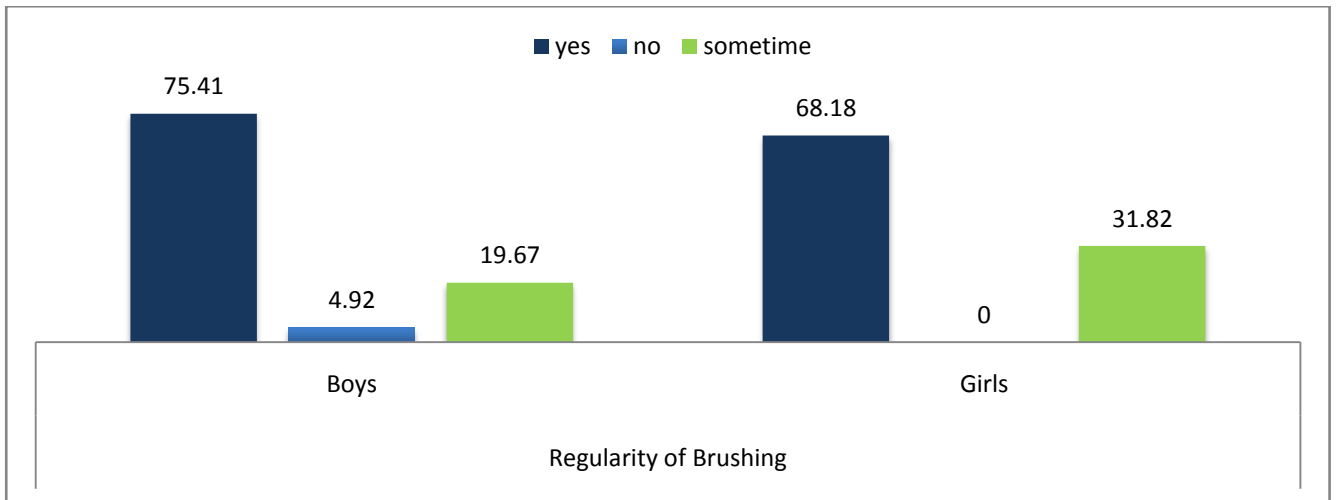
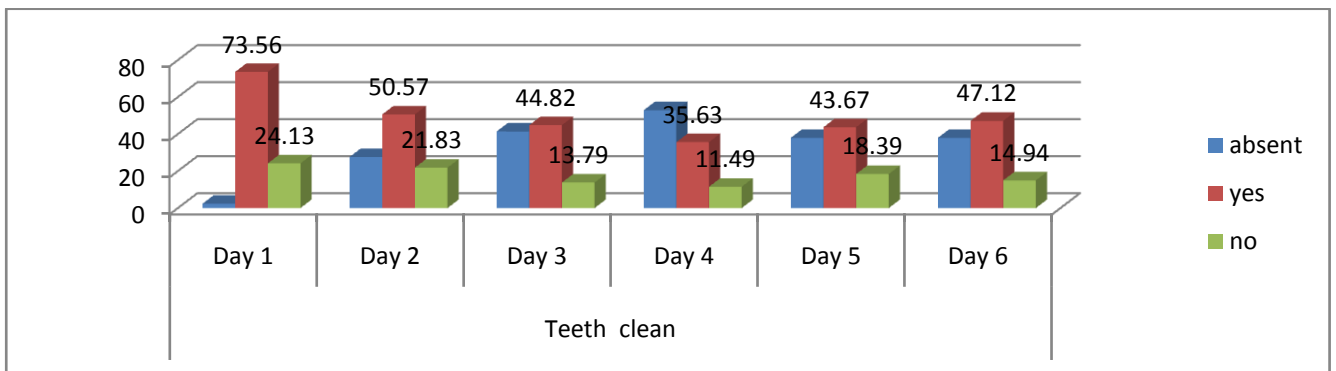


Figure I indicates data of children boys and girls separate showing regularity of brushing .There were differences in regularity of brushing their tooth. Boys were doing more regular brushing compare to the girls. In boys there was variety of responses while in girls the responses were only in yes or no. Boys responded more

yes then girls. 75.41% boys were brushing daily while in girls it was 68.18%. Around 4.92% boys had no practice of brushing on regular basis. When students were asked what you use for brushing majority of children reported tooth paste but they could not tell name of the paste.

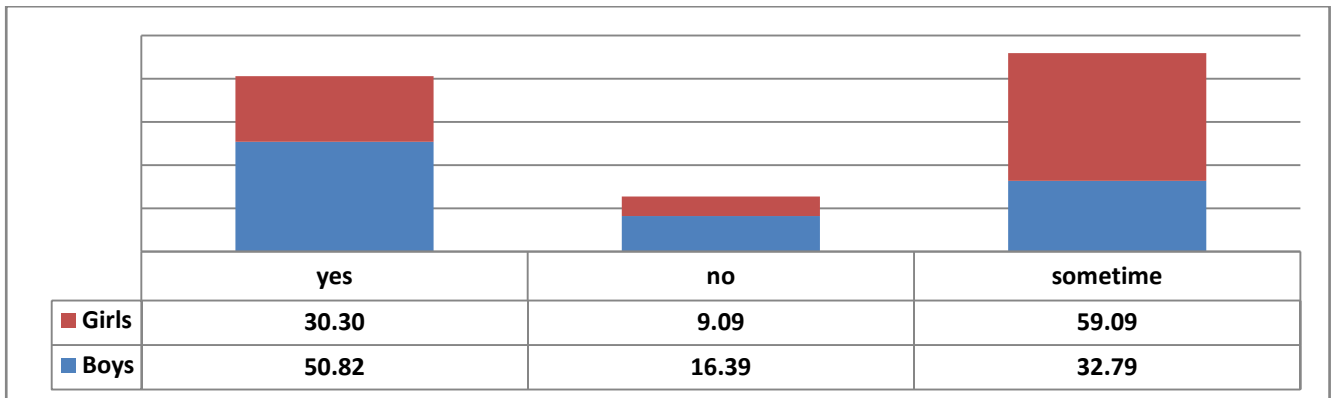
**Figure II.** Regularity of brushing among children



Data was collected for all six working days on personal hygiene. Figure II depicts that maximum students clean their teeth on day one around 73.56% only. If we observe data of all six days we can easily analyze almost 50% children were brushing their teeth on daily basis, whereas approximately 20-25% children

had no practice of brushing regularly. When the question was asked that why they don't brush daily students responded at early morning they don't get time to brush. Brushing is very basic hygiene practice which should be develop from early childhood but these poor children had no instruction of brushing seriously.

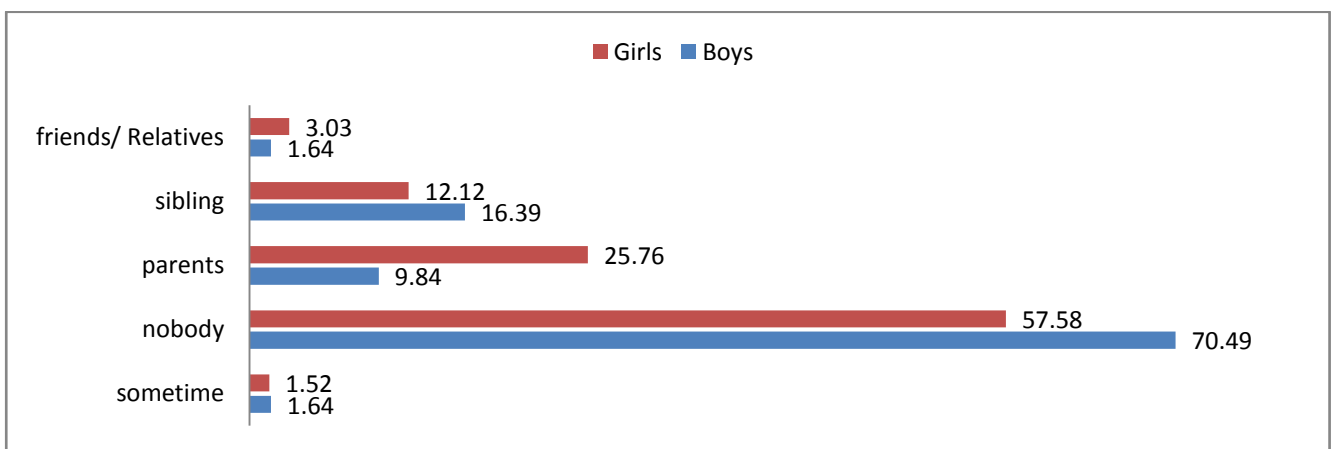
**Figure III.** Regularity of taking bath of children



Data was collected from boys and girls separately on personal hygiene. Figure III shows regularity of bathing of preschoolers of NDMC government school. The question was asked to the children do they take bath daily, boys and girls separately. The responses were in three categories yes, no and sometimes. Data showed boys were more regular in taking bath compare to the girls. 50% boys were taking bath on regular basis while around 60% girls

reported they take bath sometimes. Around 16% boys reported that they do not take bath daily and 10% girls reported same. The study was conducted in summer season, only 30- 50% children take bath in summer season then the question comes what would be regularity of bathing in winter. It is the matter of concern because bathing is also very important parameter if we talk about hygiene practices.

**Figure IV.** Helping children in lavatory



Preschoolers are very young age when the child is completely dependent on others for lavatories. During this age some helpers are required to develop good hygiene practices among children. Sometimes in schools child feels very shy if he/she is dependent for lavatory. If child is at home and both the parents are working and no maid is available then for lavatory children depends on their siblings. In this study we tried to ask the students

that who helps them for lavatory. In figure IV clearly shown that 60-70% students responded that nobody helps them for the same. This is very pathetic situation especially in school where a caretaker should be available for these kids. Boys are most affected with this problem where nobody helps them or they depend on their siblings.

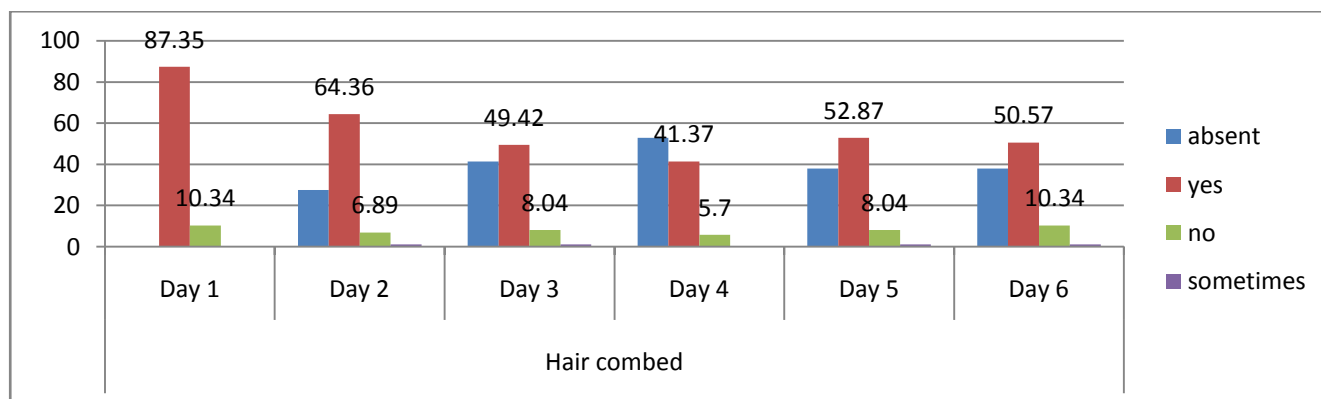
**Figure V.** Regularity of hair comb through observation

Figure V depicts the regularity of hair combing through observation. Students were observed all six days in schools, and it was found that on day one 87.35% were combed their hair. If we observe other days it was concluded only 50% children were combing their hair on regular basis. Hair comb is very basic practice but students were not combed properly or not done at all. It is the responsibility of the parents to teach them importance of some hygienic practices. Absenteeism was also found; approximately 20-40% students were absent.

### Summary and Conclusion

Personal hygiene is very important factor of the healthy life. Preschoolers to school age group children are age where children learn personal hygiene habits and it remains for the life time. It is the responsibility of the elders (family and teachers) to help the child to develop good personal hygiene habits during this age group. In NDMC schools were the low income groups children come for education, personal hygiene habits should be taught through their syllabi. Teacher's presence and instructions on personal hygiene is very important. Students listen to teacher more than family. Mothers also should pay attention towards personal hygiene of the children. If the child practices in routine this personal hygiene then automatically child will follow up in his/her daily life.

### Recommendations

Hygiene practices are very important especially in early childhood period these should be promoted from school onwards. It could be the part of their curriculum so that it can be takes up it seriously. Practically also it is important to adopt the hygienic practices. Regularity of good hygiene practices would be possible if the child

repeat it on their daily basis once the habit develop the child automatically will bring in routine.

### Acknowledgments

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