

A STUDY ON AWARENESS OF HEALTH AND HYGIENE AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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Abstract:

Good health is an asset for individuals, their communities and the nation at large. A nation cannot progress without a healthy population. Maintaining good hygiene practices is fundamental to our overall health and well-being. From preventing illness to promoting self-confidence, hygiene plays a crucial role in our daily lives. Personal hygiene encompasses practices that individuals undertake to maintain cleanliness and promote health. Practicing good personal hygiene helps prevent the spread of germs and reduces the risk of infections and diseases. Health and hygiene are necessary for our overall well-being. The present study has the objective to study the awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students. The study was conducted of 300 higher secondary students of the Coimbatore district. This study concludes that girls are having slightly higher level of awareness than boys about health and hygiene.

KEY WORDS: Awareness, Health, Hygiene, Higher secondary students.

I.INTRODUCTION

Health and hygiene start at an individual level through personal care and should influence the communities as a whole. An awareness of hygiene and health from an early age brings some positive differences in life. Health and hygiene are crucial for maintaining overall well-being, especially for students who spend long hours interacting with peers in shared environments. Poor hygiene practices continue to contribute to the spread of various communicable diseases. Hygiene practices to preserve our health. Too much work or exercise, eating or drinking are injurious to health. A regulated life is very helpful to sound health.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Awareness of Health and Hygiene has become important with changing conditions of life. It is necessary for both genders, all classes of communal, literates and illiterates in all parts of the world. Students of the higher secondary level are at the age of adolescence. Habits and behavior during adolescence have lifelong impact. As it is the last change to correct their behavior. It is essential to give awareness of health and hygiene to higher secondary students to overcome obstacles and lead a safe and healthy life. Hence, the investigator is interested in studying the awareness of health and hygiene among higher

secondary students. Hence, the present study is to find out the awareness of health and hygiene among higher secondary students.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE STUDY

Awareness: Awareness is the state of being conscious or the quality of being perceptually knowledgeable. It is also the ability to perceive, feel, know, or be cognizant of events.

Health: According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health is a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease."

Hygiene: According to the World Health Organization (WHO), hygiene refers to conditions and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases

Higher Secondary students: Higher secondary students are those in the final, crucial stage of school education, typically covering Classes 11 and 12 (ages 16–18) in a 10+2 system

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

To find out the level of awareness on Health and Hygiene among higher secondary students in Coimbatore District.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to gender.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to locality.
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to Medium of Instruction.
4. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to type of school.
5. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to the nature of school.
6. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to boys and the co- education school.
7. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to nature of family.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to gender.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to locality.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to the medium of instruction.
4. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to type of school.
5. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to the nature of school.
6. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among

higher secondary students with respect to boys and the coeducation school.

7. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to the nature of family.

LIMITATIONS

Limitations are those conditions beyond the control of the Investigator that may place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their applications to situations. The present research has the following limitations. This study is confined to the Coimbatore District only. The Study is Carried Out in the Selected Government schools, private, girls, boys' & Co-education schools located in Coimbatore District Only. The study is limited to higher secondary students with 300 samples only.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Taheri et al. (2025) examined the effectiveness of school-based educational interventions on oral health awareness and reported improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy among students, reinforcing the impact of structured health education.

Alwan et al. (2025) assessed public awareness and practice of hand hygiene in the Middle East during the COVID-19 period and concluded that awareness levels varied across populations, indicating the need for culturally tailored health promotion strategies.

Christiansen et al. (2024) argue that awareness of sanitation laws is important because some people may disregard the laws not because they are disobedient, but due to a lack of Impact of Creating Awareness on Environmental Hygienic Practices among 26 Selected Urban Slum Households Review of Literature understanding. However, ignorance may not be accepted as an excuse for breaking the law. Impact of Creating Awareness on Environmental Hygienic Practices among 31 Selected Urban Slum Households Hareesh et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review on hand hygiene behaviour among the Indian population and noted that poor sanitation and hygiene remain significant contributors to disease burden. Their findings stress the need for sustained awareness programs to maintain hygiene practices beyond pandemic situations.

Malhotra et al. (2024) evaluated oral hygiene awareness among undergraduate students and found moderate knowledge levels with gaps in practice, recommending targeted awareness campaigns to improve behavioural adherence.

Demir and Haşiloğlu (2023) analysed hygiene habits among secondary school students and found a relationship between hygiene practices and broader environmental knowledge. Their research underscored the educational value of developing hygiene awareness at the school level.

Ayakumar, Ebenraj, and Elairajan (2022) examined oral hygiene awareness among paramedical students in Chennai. Their cross-sectional study stressed that maintaining oral hygiene is essential for overall health and that monitoring awareness levels helps prevent oral diseases and supports general health check-ups.

Xu et al. (2022) explored changes in hygiene awareness and behaviour in public settings during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study found that health crises can increase awareness and alter hygiene practices, highlighting the influence of social and environmental factors on public health behaviour

METHODOLOGY

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The survey method is used for this study.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population for the present study consists of higher secondary school students in Coimbatore District.

SAMPLE & SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

In this study the investigator has applied a simple random sampling technique to collect data. A total of 300 samples were collected from XIth standard students in Coimbatore District.

TOOLS FOR THE STUDY

In the present study the investigator used the following tools for collecting data.

1. Personal Data Sheet: A personal data sheet is prepared from which the investigator got the demographical information, such as gender, medium of instruction, type of school, location of school, nature of school, and type of family.

2. Questionnaire

The investigator used a standardized tool that was prepared by P. SHIJIMOL for the research study in 2012 regarding health and hygiene. It contains 35 statements. Two responses were given as yes/no. The students had to mark any one of the responses that they wished to answer. Finally both the responses were consolidated and used for the statistical analysis. **Variables:** Health and hygiene are independent variables. Demographic variables are gender, medium of instruction, type of school, location of the school, nature of the school & type of family.

VALIDITY & RELIABILITY OF THE TOOL

Content validity is used to find out the validity of the tool. Since it is a standardized tool, the validity had already been ensured by the experts in the educational field. To find the reliability of this tool, the test-retest method has been used. The reliability coefficient value was calculated by Karl Pearson’s product moment correlation method. The reliability coefficient of the tool was .97. As the value was high, the tool was found to be reliable.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

In the present study the investigator used two types of statistical techniques, namely descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and Hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to gender.

VARIABLES	GENDER				Calculated 't' Value	Remarks
	Male		Female			
AWARENESS ON HEALTH AND HYGIENE	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	1.4336	Not significant
	62.28	4,04	62.92	3.69		

(At 0.05% significant level the tabulation of 't' at df=298 is 1.96

Since the calculated value (1.4336) for total is less than the table value of 't' (1.96), the null hypothesis is accepted. It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference in the level of awareness of health and hygiene with respect to gender.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and Hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to locality.

VARIABLES	LOCATION OF THE SCHOOL					
AWARENESS ON HEALTH AND HYGIENE	RURAL		URBAN		Calculated 't' Value	Remarks
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		

Since the calculated value (1.0684) for total is less than the table value of 't' (1.96), the null hypothesis is accepted. It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference in their level of awareness of health and hygiene with respect to locality of the school.

3. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and Hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to medium of Instruction.

VARIABLES	MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION					
AWARENESS ON HEALTH AND HYGIENE	TAMIL MEDIUM		ENGLISH MEDIUM		Calculated 't' Value	Remarks
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		

Since the calculated value (1.0684) for total is less than the table value of 't' (1.96), the null hypothesis is accepted. It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference in their level of awareness of health and hygiene with respect to locality of the school.

4. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and Hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to type of school.

VARIABLES	TYPE OF SCHOOL					
AWARENESS ON HEALTH AND HYGIENE	GOVERNMENT (160)		PRIVATE (70)		Calculated 't' Value	Remarks
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		

Since the calculated value (3.5473) for total is greater than the table value of 't' (1.96), the null hypothesis is rejected. It is inferred from the above table that there is a significant difference in their level of awareness on health and hygiene with respect to type of school. According to the mean value, students from private schools have more awareness on health and hygiene.

5. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and Hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to nature of school.

VARIABLES	NATURE OF SCHOOL				Calculated 't' Value	Remarks
	BOYS SCHOOL		GIRLS SCHOOL			
AWARENESS OF HEALTH AND HYGIENE	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	1.7412	Not significant
	61.25	3.89	62.27	3.02		

Since the calculated value (1.7412) for total is greater than the table value of 't' (1.96), the null hypothesis is accepted. It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference in their level of awareness on health and hygiene with respect to boys and girls' school students. According to the mean value, the students coming from girls' school have more awareness on health and hygiene.

6. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and Hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to Boys and Co- education school.

VARIABLES	NATURE OF SCHOOL				Calculated 't' Value	Remarks
	BOYS		Co- Education			
AWARENESS ON HEALTH AND HYGIENE	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	2.2144	significant
	61.25	3.89	63.33	4.04		

Since the calculated value (2.2144) for total is greater than the table value of (1.96), the null hypothesis is rejected. It is inferred from the above table that there is a significant difference in their level of awareness on health and hygiene with respect to boys' and Co-Education school students. According to the mean value, students coming from a co-education school have more awareness on health and hygiene.

7. There is no significant difference between the mean score of awareness on health and Hygiene among higher secondary students with respect to nature of family.

VARIABLES	NATURE OF THE FAMILY				Calculated 't' Value	Remarks
	NUCLEAR		JOINT			
AWARENESS OF HEALTH AND HYGIENE	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	2.2401	Significant
	62.87	3.86	61.49	3.79		

Since the calculated value (2.2401) for total is greater than the table value of 't'(1.96), the null hypothesis is rejected. It is inferred from the above table that there is a significant difference in the level of awareness on health and hygiene with respect to nuclear and joint family students. According to mean value, students coming from nuclear families have more awareness on health and hygiene.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the present study, there is no significant difference between girls and boys, rural and urban schools, medium of instruction, and boys' and girls' school students in their level of awareness on health and

hygiene. This shows that gender, location of the school, medium of instruction & boys and girls school do not influence the level of awareness on health and hygiene. But the present study concludes that those who come from a private school, co-education school, nuclear family have a high level of awareness on health and hygiene. This shows that private schools, co-education schools, and nuclear families are influencing the awareness of health and hygiene among higher secondary students.

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