

**KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF ORAL HYGIENE
AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN NORTH
OKKALAPA
TOWNSHIP, YANGON REGION (2013)**

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ABSTRACT

The school based, cross sectional descriptive study was conducted from September to December 2013, with the objectives of assessment of oral hygiene knowledge and practice among primary school children of North Okkalapa Township, Yangon Region. The study sample consisted of 240 grade (5) school children who were randomly selected from six Basic Primary Schools of North-okkalapa Township. Data on oral health knowledge and practices was collected by means of face to face interview. Dental caries examination was done and noted by three dental surgeons. Nearly two-thirds were 9 years old children studying at grade (5). Knowledge of school children was not different by gender. The results of the study showed that all of the children brushed their teeth using tooth brush and paste. About 48 children (20%) brushed teeth once daily. Most children (92.1%) said high sugar diet causes dental decay while as more than half (72.5%) thought soft drinks causes dental caries. Only 87.1% answered that dental caries can be prevented if oral hygiene practices are followed properly. About 46.2% of 9 to 13 years old school children who participated in the survey reported that they suffered from toothache within last one month. Nearly 75% of children reported eating snack food less than three times per day. Prevalence of dental caries in primary and permanent dentition among school children is 65.4% which is above the goals recommended by WHO and Federation of Dentistry International (FDI) of less than 50% caries free children. Majority of students had adequate level of knowledge on oral health but they had poor level of oral hygiene practices. Comprehensive oral health educational programs are needed to improve oral hygiene practices among school children.