

ABSTRACT

A cross-sectional descriptive study was carried out to explore the knowledge, attitude, subjective norms and behavior of personal hygiene and environmental sanitation among Grade nine students in Nyaung Lay Bin Township with self-administered questionnaire from September to November 2009. Apart from that, observation of sampled schools, students and their households to assess the sanitation facilities and key informant interview was done for qualitative analysis. The findings indicated that the mean age of students is 13.39 ± 0.65 years. The students' knowledge and attitude on personal hygiene and environmental sanitation was high in both urban and rural area apart from that misconception on method of purification. Majority of students have subjective norms about personal hygiene and environmental sanitation towards positive effects on health. Nearly all students had good practice on tooth brushing and refuse disposal but only half of the students had good practice on hand washing and toilet use. Students who suffered from toothache within three months were (25%) and diarrhea within three months were (8%). The characteristics of students who had adequate knowledge and positive attitude on personal hygiene and environmental sanitation were younger age, female students, residing in urban area, having high educational level of parents and having working mothers. There is a significant association between norms about hand washing and practice on hand washing and between good latrine facilities and practice on latrine use. Analysis of observation on personal hygiene and environmental sanitation showed that personal hygiene among students were satisfactory apart from that unclean nails. Majority of students' households use water from deep well, drink unboiled water, use indirect pit latrine and dumping on refuse disposal. There was a significant association in drinking water used between observation and reporting of students. In observation of schools, there was no School health medical officer in both schools so training of teachers concerning health should be given. There was enough water to wash hands but adequate hand washing facilities should be provided and also needed to promote the latrine facilities in both schools. Although the students had good knowledge and attitude of personal hygiene and environmental sanitation, inadequate opportunities and lack of sanitation facilities at school did not allow them to practice the health knowledge they had acquired. Recommendations were made to the school authority to direct more effort toward providing safe and adequate water supply, adequate hand washing facilities, promote the food stall standard and renovating the existing toilets. The school should also emphasize the practice of good personal hygiene and environmental sanitation to complement theoretical input.