

THE EFFECT OF DENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION ON DENTAL AND ORAL HEALTH BEHAVIOR IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KUPANG, EAST NUSA TENGGARA

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ABSTRACT

Background: Good oral and dental hygiene can help prevent bad breath, tooth decay and gum disease. It can help keep an individual's teeth healthy as one gets older. An unhealthy mouth, especially if one has gum disease, may increase the risk of serious health problems such as heart attack, stroke, poorly controlled diabetes, and preterm labor. The Basic Health Research (Riskesdas) by Ministry of Health 2013 reported that children aged 10-14 years who had oral and dental health problem was 25.2%. This study aimed to determine the effect of dental health education (DHE) on dental and oral health behavior in elementary school children in Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara.

Subjects and Method: This was an analytic observational study with a cross-sectional design. The study was conducted in Taebenu district, Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara. A sample of 303 elementary school children was selected for this study by random sampling. The dependent variable was oral and dental health-related behavior as measured by student's knowledge, attitude, sweet snack consumption, and tooth brushing. The oral and dental health was measured by Decay Missing Filled-Teeth (DMF-T). The independent variable was DHE. The data were collected by questionnaire and analyzed by a logistic regression.

Results: The oral and dental health in the elementary school children was poor with DMF-T index of 0.5. DHE increased student's knowledge (OR= 17.80; 95% CI= 13.39 to 22.21; $p < 0.001$), improved attitude (OR= 10.58; 95% CI= 6.31 to 14.85; $p < 0.001$), reduced sweet snack consumption (OR= 13.63; 95% CI= 6.69 to 20.57; $p < 0.001$), and enhanced tooth brushing (OR= 12.46; 95% CI= 6.61 to 18.31; $p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: DHE is effective in improving oral and dental health behavior as measured by student's knowledge, attitude, sweet snack consumption, and tooth brushing.

Keywords: Dental health education, oral and dental health, Decay Missing Filled-Teeth, school children

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