FACTORS INFLUENCING UPTAKE OF HAND WASHING IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MACHAKOS COUNTY-KENYA

BY

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ABSTRACT

Diseases related to inadequate unsafe and safe water supply, inadequate sanitation facilities and poor hand washing practice is huge burden in developing countries. Many public primary schools both urban and rural are severely affected by these facilities. School children's health, ability to learn and their academic performance has been affected by diseases spread through poor hygiene. Therefore, school administrators in Machakos central division have raised concern about poor hygiene practice affecting both pupils health and learning ability. This has become a worry to the world because academic failure stress, not only frustrating to students and parents but a grave on society in terms of manpower in all spheres of economic and political. This study used descriptive survey design to investigate the uptake of hand washing with soap as a health technique to curb these diseases in public primary schools in central division of Machakos County. The study specific objectives were: to establish the level uptake of hand washing, to examine the factors influencing hand washing, to assess pupils' awareness of importance of hand washing and to identify strategies for addressing hand washing with soap in public primary schools in central division of Machakos County. This study was based on Icek Ajzen theory (1991)-Theory of planned Behaviour. The sampling frame targeted all schools in central division of Machakos County, with universe of 69 schools- 26,567 pupils' population, 700 teachers' population and sample size of 15 schools randomly selected. School administrators and teachers filled in the questionnaire, pupils were interviewed and the researcher did the observation, all to collect primary data. Secondary data was sourced from relevant reviewed literature using data documentation guides. Testing of questionnaire was conducted from 3 schools from the target population. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistics package of social science (SPSS) while qualitative data were presented through descriptive methodology. These results are expected to improve hand washing with soap in public primary schools of Machakos County, school curriculum on hygiene education, MOPHS in hygiene programmes and enhance MDGs. From the findings the study established low level uptake of hand washing and concluded that unsafe and inadequate water, inadequate sanitation, lack of soap and awareness influence hand washing. The study recommended that all stakeholders to address issues of water, sanitation, soap feeding programme and awareness in order to increase the level uptake of hand washing in schools.

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