PROPER HAND WASHING PRACTICE
AMONG SIXTH GRADE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN SELAT SUB-DISTRICT, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive and cross-sectional study was conducted to describe hand washing practice before eating and after visiting the toilet among sixth grade elementary school students, the prevalence of proper hand washing, and the association with related factors such as socio-demographics, knowledge, attitude, subjective norms, perceived control, and availability of proper hand washing facilities. Data were collected by using a self administered questionnaire from 274 students at 7 public elementary schools in Selat sub-district, which were randomly selected by proportion from 5 villages. Chi square, correlation, and multiple logistic regression tests were used to analyze the association and to predict factors related to proper hand washing.

There are 9 different ways of hand washing which were combined from two main activities, i.e., washing hands before eating food and after visiting the toilet, and three possible practices such as washing hands by using water and soap, water only, and not wash hands. Only 40.5% of respondents washed their hands by using water and soap at those two critical moments. Attitude, perceived control, and availability of facilities (water, soap, and hand washing stands) were significantly associated with hand washing practice. By adjusting other factors, positive attitude (Adjusted Odds Ratio [AOR] = 2.23, 95% CI = 1.03-4.85), availability of clean water (AOR = 4.31, 95% CI = 1.96-9.48) and soap (AOR = 5.39, 95% CI = 2.30-12.64) at hand washing stands were significant predictors of proper hand washing.

Conclusion: The hand washing practice and prevalence of proper hand washing should be a matter of greater concern. Hand washing promotion should be more effective in schools and better facilities need to be made available in order to increase the prevalence of proper hand washing among elementary students.

KEY WORDS: PROPER HAND WASHING / ELEMENTARY STUDENTS / SELAT INDONESIA