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Original Article

Comparison of Incremental dmft/s of Oral Health Promotion through Teachers' Brushing versus Use of Fluoride Varnish in a group of Thai Preschoolers: A Pilot Study

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Abstract

The objective of this pilot study was to compare the caries increments in a group of preschoolers between an oral health education of schoolteachers to correctly brush the children's teeth and fluoride varnish application by a dentist. The subjects included 36 two-to-four years old preschoolers in Piraya-Navin school that taking children from low-income families. The children were randomly assigned into 2 groups after being stratified into 1) no caries, 2) 1 to 10 dmfs, and 3) more than 10 dmfs groups. The control group received brushing by teachers and the experiment group received fluoride varnish by a dentist. Data were analyzed using the t-test to compare the incremental dmft/s of the two groups. The results showed that mean age of the children was 39.8 ± 2.3 months and 13 were females. Eighteen of them were randomly assigned into fluoride varnish group including 6 females. Another 18 in the brushing group included 7 females. Only 24 of all subjects completed the 6-month study, which 10 were randomly assigned into the fluoride varnish group. This group had mean age of 39.5 ± 2.0 months and the mean dmfs was 13.1 ± 10.3 in which 3 of whom were females. The brushing group had 7 females and 7 males. They had the mean age of 39.8 ± 2.6 months and the mean dmfs was 9.9 ± 13.6 . The t-test comparing incremental dmfs of both groups found that the fluoride varnish group had greater incremental dmfs than the brushing group (10.7 ± 13.3 and 3.6 ± 7.4 , respectively). The finding was statistically significant with 90% confidence interval ($p = .093$). In conclusion, with a 6-month follow-up, oral health education to schoolteachers may help prevent dental caries and promote oral health of this group of preschoolers as compared to fluoride varnish application. Future studies are needed to confirm the findings of this pilot study.

Key words: brushing; fluoride varnish; incremental dmfs; preschool children