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Child-to-child school health program (CtCSHP): Its impact on the oral health behavior of Grade 1 pupils in the Division of La Union, Philippines

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Objective: To determine the effectiveness of the Child-to-Child School Health Program (CtCSHP) on the oral health behavior of Grade I pupils in the Division of La Union, Philippines within five months of implementation.

Methods: A randomized trial was applied to the subjects. First, an assessment of the oral health behavior of the pupils in terms of toothbrushing and sodium fluoride mouth rinsing was conducted before the start of the study. The schools were randomly distributed to either the test group or control group. The Child-to-Child School Health Program (CtCSHP), utilizing the "Little Doctors' Club," and dental health education were provided to the test group, while only dental health education was provided to the control group. Toothbrushing and mouth rinsing with sodium fluoride (hereafter simply "mouth rinsing") were the prevention methods used. Data was gathered using toothbrushing and mouth-rinsing cards. An assessment of the oral health behavior and an analysis of the significant differences between the oral health behaviors of the test and control groups were conducted after five months after the interventions. Eight public elementary schools were randomly chosen from the two districts in the Division of La Union to comprise the test group (four schools) and the control group (four schools). A total of 353 Grade 1 pupils took part in the study: 178 pupils in the test group and 175 pupils in the control group. To establish whether or not there is a significant difference between the oral health behaviors of the test and control groups, the data were entered in a statistical tool pack and analyzed with a t-test.

Results: The oral health behavior of the test group in terms of toothbrushing and mouth rinsing improved during November but deteriorated during December. Great progress was observed during the succeeding months from January to March. The oral health behavior of the control group improved only during November, eventually declining from December to March. Moreover, although there was no significant difference between the test and control groups in toothbrushing for November ($p=0.1018$), a significant difference was noted from the months of January to March. Regarding mouth rinsing, it was found that there was a significant difference between the test and control groups in all the months.

Biography

Artemio Rivera LICOS is a multi-awarded dental practitioner who has proven his commitment in the field of Public Health. He was a graduate of Doctor of Dental Medicine at University of Baguio in 1993. He has earned his advanced studies in Public Health as Doctor of Public Health at the National Institute of Public Health, Wako City, Japan. He garnered his Master of Public Health major in International Health at the National Institute of Public Health, Wako City, Japan. Dr. Licos is a truly Health Service Provider wherein he served as Dentist II at the Department of Education, Division of La Union from 2002 to 2009. He eventually transferred and promoted as Dentist III at the Department of Health Regional Office I on April 1, 2009 wherein he was the Oral Health Program Manager in region 1 from 2009 to 2016. On April 13, 2016, he transferred to a DOH Retained Hospital, the Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center, City of San Fernando La Union as Dentist III. On December 16, 2017, he was promoted as Dentist V and presently the Head of the Dental Medicine Department of Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center, City of San Fernando La Union. Throughout his time in government as dedicated Learning Service Provider, he has received numerous recognitions and citations not only for his invaluable dental service and practice but also for his unrelenting humanitarian care and compassion.

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