Title: Design & evaluation of an educational intervention to reduce head lice infestation in female students in Chabahar city

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Abstract: Introduction

One of the most important student health problems is head lice infestation which causes physical, mental and social complications. The main reasons for ineffective control of head lice are lack of knowledge and negative attitude about control and prevention of head lice, incorrect use of pediculicides, applying alternative remedies and methods which their efficacy have not been clinically proven, improper attention to possible infection transmission, difficulty in diagnosing head lice infestation and embarrassment and social stigma that prevents reporting. In fact these mentioned potential problems mostly refer to inadequate health education and cultural poverty.

The goal of the present study was to measure the effects of a designed educational intervention to reduce head lice infestation in female elementary students in Chabahar city.

Materials and methods

This research was a RCT (Randomized Controlled Trial) study. Data gathering tools were questionnaire, checklist and head examination. Two schools were randomly selected among female primary schools in Chabahar. Totally, 153 students were divided into case (75) and control (78) groups. After collecting the data, an educational program was designed and performed in the case group. The intervention was evaluated after 2 months.

Results

Results showed a significant difference in knowledge, attitude, and practice of the students in the case group pre and post education (P<0.0001) which in the control group it was not significant (P>0.05). The infestation rate was 69.3% in the case group before the education, and 82.1% in the control group which decreased to 26.7% in the case group (P<0.0001) and no significant difference in the control group after education (P<0.05). There was a significant relationship between infection and some demographic variables such as father's level of education, number of bedrooms, number of individuals in a room, lack of water for bathing at home, sort of hair, preinfection in students and having infected cases in family (P<0.05).

Discussion & conclusion:

The health education program had a positive effect on the reduction of Pediculosis Capitis among students. The affective supervisory, cooperative educational strategy e.g engaging students, their mothers and teachers in health education program with educating already defined simple and suitable educational materials and methods, affected on knowledge, attitude and practice concerning head lice infestation significantly. Therefore, it is suggested applying deliberated educational intervention on students, their parents and teachers might be useful to reach standard health promotion criteria in this field.

Keywords: health education program, head lice, elementary students

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