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**Elementary School Student's Knowledge of the Proper Way to Brush Their Teeth Using Flash Cards**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Oral and dental health problems not only affect adults but also children, especially elementary school children. Children are vulnerable to oral health problems due to poor dental hygiene resulting from a lack of knowledge about proper tooth brushing techniques. The problem in this study is the low frequency of brushing teeth twice a day among third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya. **Object:** The purpose of this study was to determine the knowledge of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya about the correct way to brush their teeth after providing health education using Flash Cards. This research method was descriptive. **Method:** The target group was 31 third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya. Data collection used a questionnaire. The data analysis technique used in this study was calculating the average results of respondents' answers, converting them into percentages, and then presenting them in tabular form. **Results:** The results of this study indicate that the knowledge level of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding tooth brushing frequency and time, proper brushing technique, toothpaste usage, and toothbrush selection is good after providing education using Flash Cards.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, Tooth Brushing Method, Flash Cards

**BACKGROUND**

Dental and oral health problems do not only occur in adults, but also affect children. Elementary school children, in particular, are highly vulnerable to dental and oral health issues due to poor oral hygiene conditions (Aqidatunisa et al., 2022). 93.2% of children aged 5–9 years brush their teeth daily, yet only 1.4% do it correctly. Several factors influence oral and dental hygiene, including knowledge of proper tooth-brushing techniques, frequency of brushing, timing of brushing, and the use of toothpaste (Kemenkes, 2018). These factors play an important role in preventing the early accumulation of plaque and debris. The main cause of poor oral hygiene among elementary school children is improper tooth-brushing behavior (Ekasari et al., 2022).

Tooth brushing is the activity of cleaning the teeth using a toothbrush or other tools, with or without toothpaste. Brushing teeth is a routine daily activity performed to maintain oral hygiene, except in emergency situations such as illness, accidents, jaw fractures, trismus (inability to open the mouth), or other conditions that prevent a person from brushing their teeth (Kemenkes RI, 2023). According to the Federation Dental International (FDI), proper tooth-brushing behavior involves brushing teeth at least twice a day, specifically after breakfast and before going to bed at night. Children should be taught how to brush their teeth properly so that they can do it independently in the future. By learning the correct tooth-brushing technique from an early age, it is expected

that children will develop and maintain good oral hygiene habits into adulthood (Pagayang et al., 2023).

SDN Mojo I Surabaya is one of the schools under the supervision of the Mojo Public Health Center (Puskesmas Mojo) in Surabaya. According to the school principal, activities conducted by the health center to improve students' oral and dental health are carried out only once a year. One of these activities includes dental and oral health examinations. Based on interviews conducted with 31 third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya, 74.1% of the students reported brushing their teeth once a day, 16.1% brushed twice a day, and 9.6% brushed more than twice a day. Meanwhile, according to the SKI 2023, the percentage of children aged 5–9 years who brush their teeth twice a day is 73.6%. The proportion of students brushing their teeth twice a day at SDN Mojo I Surabaya is therefore relatively low, indicating the need for education on proper tooth-brushing techniques and appropriate brushing times.

The data on tooth-brushing frequency among third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya illustrate that efforts to maintain oral and dental hygiene among elementary school students are still lacking. This suggests the need to improve students' knowledge and awareness to help maintain good oral hygiene. Based on this background, the main problem identified in this study is the low frequency of brushing teeth twice a day among third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya in 2024. One of the roles of dental and oral therapists, as stated in the Indonesian Ministry of Health Regulation No. 20 of 2016, is promotive action, which aims to improve public health. The promotive effort in this study involves providing education through various media.

One of the theoretical foundations for using media in learning is Edgar Dale's Cone of Experience Theory. Various types of media can be used in the learning process, and one of the media suitable for health education is visual media in the form

of flash cards. Flash cards are easy to remember because they contain images, letters, or numbers that stimulate the brain to retain information longer. They are also very attractive to children because they are designed in colorful and engaging formats (Putri et al., 2023).

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research used in this study is descriptive research, which aims to examine the knowledge of students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding proper tooth-brushing techniques using Flash Cards. This study used a descriptive research design aimed at examining the knowledge of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding proper tooth-brushing techniques using flash cards media. The population in this study included all third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya, totaling 31 respondents. The study was conducted at SDN Mojo I Surabaya, located at Jl. Mojoklanggru Lor No. 24, Mojo Village, Gubeng District, Surabaya City. The research was carried out from September 2024 to March 2025.

The research procedure was conducted through a play-and-learn method using flash cards media. 1) The researcher held a technical meeting with the enumerators to discuss their respective tasks and the flow of activities. 2) Respondents were divided into three groups, with each group consisting of 10–11 students. 3) The researcher distributed 20 flash cards containing answer options to each group. 4) Twenty questions were prepared in advance and read aloud by the researcher. 5) In answering, respondents selected one flash cards corresponding to the question and raised it after the researcher's signal. 6) Among the three groups, the group that answered the fastest and most accurately received one point. 7) After each question, the researcher explained why the chosen answer was correct. For example: "How many times should you brush your teeth at minimum each day?" The correct answer is "at least

twice a day,” with the reason being to keep the oral cavity clean and prevent food debris buildup. 8) In this activity, the researcher acted as a moderator—explaining the game rules, reading the questions, recording the scores for each group, and announcing the winner.

In this study, data were collected through interviews. Data analysis was conducted by calculating the average score of respondents’ answers, converting them into percentages, and presenting the results

in tabular form. This study was carried out in accordance with research ethics guidelines and was approved by the Ethics Committee of Poltekkes Kemenkes Surabaya under registration number No. EA/3673/KEPK-Poltekkes\_Sby/V/2025, with informed consent obtained from all respondents.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1.**

Distribution Based on Age and Gender of Third-Grade Students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya in 2025

No.	Category	Number	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>			
1.	Male	15	29%
	Female	16	71%
<b>Age</b>			
2.	8 years old	9	48%
	9 years old	22	52%
<b>Total Number of Third-Grade Students</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1 shows it can be seen that among the 31 third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya, the majority were female accounting for 71%, while in the age

category most students were 9 years old with a percentage of 52%.

**Table 2.**

Distribution of Knowledge Levels of Third-Grade Students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya Regarding the Frequency and Timing of Tooth Brushing Using Flash Cards in 2025

No.	Question	Correct		Incorrect	
		Σ	%	Σ	%
1.	How many times at minimum should you brush your teeth in a day?	31	100%	0	0%
2.	How long should you brush each section of your teeth?	29	94%	2	6%
3.	When is the right time to brush your teeth in the morning?	31	100%	0	0%
4.	When is the right time to brush your teeth at night?	27	87%	4	13%

No.	Question	Correct		Incorrect	
		Σ	%	Σ	%
5.	How many brushing movements should be done on each tooth surface?	25	81%	6	19%
6.	What is the correct duration for brushing your teeth?	24	77%	7	23%
<b>Total</b>		<b>167</b>	<b>539%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>Average</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Category</b>		<b>Good</b>			

Table 2 shows that the knowledge level of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding the frequency and timing of tooth brushing after receiving

education using flash cards media is categorized as good, with a percentage of 90%.

**Table 3.**  
Distribution of Knowledge Levels of Third-Grade Students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya Regarding Proper Tooth-Brushing Techniques Using Flash Cards in 2025

No.	Question	Correct		Incorrect	
		Σ	%	Σ	%
1.	How do you brush the front part of your teeth?	31	100%	0	0%
2.	How do you brush the teeth surfaces facing the palate?	29	94%	2	6%
3.	How do you brush the chewing surfaces of your teeth?	23	74%	8	26%
4.	How do you brush the surfaces of the teeth facing the tongue?	26	84%	5	16%
5.	How do you brush the surfaces of the teeth facing the cheeks?	29	94%	2	6%
6.	How do you clean the surface of the tongue?	26	84%	5	16%
7.	Besides the teeth, which other parts should be brushed while brushing your teeth?	28	90%	3	10%
<b>Total</b>		<b>192</b>	<b>620%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Average</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Category</b>		<b>Good</b>			

Table 3 shows that the knowledge level of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding proper tooth-brushing

techniques after receiving education using flash cards media is categorized as good, with a percentage of 89%.

**Table 4**  
Distribution of Knowledge Levels of Third-Grade Students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya  
Regarding the Use of Toothpaste Using Flash Cards in 2025

No.	Question	Correct		Incorrect	
		Σ	%	Σ	%
1.	What is the function of toothpaste?	28	90%	3	10%
2.	Which toothpaste is the best to use?	27	87%	4	13%
3.	How much toothpaste should be used when brushing teeth?	29	94%	2	6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>84</b>	<b>271%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Average</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Category</b>		<b>Good</b>			

Table 4 shows that the knowledge level of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding the use of toothpaste after receiving education using flash cards

media is categorized as good, with a percentage of 90%.

**Table 5.**  
Distribution of Knowledge Levels of Third-Grade Students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya  
Regarding the Selection of Toothbrushes Using Flash Cards in 2025

No.	Question	Correct		Incorrect	
		Σ	%	Σ	%
1.	A good toothbrush selection is...	21	68%	10	32%
2.	Why is it recommended to use a small toothbrush head?	22	71%	9	29%
3.	Which type of bristles is the best to use?	30	97%	1	3%
4.	Why should hard bristles not be used?	31	100%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>104</b>	<b>336%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Average</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Category</b>		<b>Good</b>			

Table 5 shows that the knowledge level of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding the selection of toothbrushes after receiving education

using flash cards media is categorized as good, with a percentage of 84%.

**Table 6.**  
Recapitulation of the Knowledge Results of Third-Grade Students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya  
Regarding Proper Tooth-Brushing Techniques Using Flash Cards in 2025

No.	Knowledge	Number of Correct Responses
1.	Knowledge about the frequency and timing of tooth brushing	90%
2.	Knowledge about proper tooth brushing techniques	89%
3.	Knowledge about the use of toothpaste	90%
4.	Knowledge about the selection of toothbrushes	84%
<b>Total</b>		<b>353%</b>
<b>Average</b>		<b>88%</b>
<b>Category</b>		<b>Good</b>

Table 6 shows that the knowledge level of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding proper tooth-brushing methods after receiving education using flash cards media is categorized as good, with a percentage of 88%.

### Discussion

Based on data analysis, it was found that the level of knowledge among third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding the frequency and timing of tooth brushing was categorized as good. This was evident from the students' ability to correctly answer questions related to how often and when to brush their teeth. The assessed aspects included the frequency of brushing per day, the duration of brushing each section, brushing times in the morning and at night, the number of strokes on each tooth surface, and the total duration of brushing.

Dental health education is an important initial step in improving knowledge about health, especially among elementary school children. One of the common dental health problems is the lack of knowledge about proper tooth-brushing techniques. Efforts to improve dental health can be carried out through health education programs. Through such programs, it is

expected that students' knowledge and awareness about the importance of maintaining oral and dental health will increase.

Brushing teeth is the simplest way to maintain oral and dental hygiene. Good oral hygiene is influenced not only by proper brushing technique but also by the correct frequency and timing of brushing. It is recommended to brush teeth at least twice a day—after breakfast and before going to bed at night. The ideal duration for brushing is about 2–3 minutes, with approximately 20 seconds spent on each section. This process should be repeated 2–3 times on every tooth surface, including the areas facing the lips, cheeks, palate, and tongue, to ensure that all parts are thoroughly cleaned (Safriyana et al., 2022).

Based on the explanation above, brushing teeth is a simple action to maintain oral and dental cleanliness. However, if it is not done consistently with the correct frequency and timing, optimal oral hygiene cannot be achieved. Therefore, understanding the proper frequency and timing of tooth brushing needs to be continuously emphasized so that the habit of brushing teeth can be carried out independently.

The majority of students had good knowledge regarding the frequency and timing of tooth brushing. However, some students were unable to answer questions related to the duration of brushing each section, brushing time at night, the number of strokes on each tooth surface, and the total brushing duration. This study is consistent with the research conducted by Haloho et al. (2025), which stated that the knowledge of fifth- and sixth-grade students at SDN 3 Balokang about tooth brushing frequency after receiving health education was categorized as good. This is due to the students' developing cognitive abilities, which enable them to think logically and have good memory retention. These abilities support their understanding of information related to dental health, including brushing techniques, frequency, and duration.

The use of learning media in dental health education plays an important role in supporting the delivery of information. Appropriate media can help visualize the material, attract attention, and facilitate understanding, especially among elementary school students. In addition, learning media also contribute to forming habits of maintaining oral and dental health. Health education delivered interactively and engagingly through learning media can enhance students' knowledge about healthy living behaviors independently (Rahman & Purwakanthi, 2021).

Flash cards are one of the learning media that can be used to increase students' knowledge about oral and dental hygiene. Flash cards are instructional tools consisting of cards that contain images, text, or specific symbols. This medium helps students recall information presented on the cards while stimulating their attention and interest in learning, thus supporting the effectiveness of the learning process (Wahyu et al., 2024). This is consistent with the study by Rohmah & Susilowati (2024), which showed that the knowledge of first-, second-, and third-grade students at SDN Noyosutan

Karangrejo, Ketawangrejo, Grabag District, Purworejo, Central Java, about dental health improved after receiving education using flash cards media.

Based on data analysis, it was found that the level of knowledge among third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding proper tooth-brushing techniques was categorized as good. This was evident from the students' ability to correctly answer questions related to correct brushing techniques. Proper brushing techniques include cleaning the front teeth, the surfaces facing the palate, the chewing surfaces, the surfaces facing the tongue, the surfaces facing the cheeks, and the tongue surface.

Brushing teeth is the simplest way to maintain oral and dental hygiene. Good oral hygiene can be achieved by brushing teeth using the correct technique. There are several tooth-brushing techniques: 1) Scrub technique – involves brushing the tooth surfaces horizontally (back and forth). This movement is applied to the chewing surfaces of both the upper and lower jaws. 2) Fones technique – involves placing the bristles of the toothbrush on the outer surface of the teeth while the upper and lower jaws are closed. The brush is moved in a circular motion, allowing both upper and lower teeth and gums to be cleaned simultaneously. This movement is performed on the surfaces facing the cheeks. 3) Rolling technique – involves brushing from top to bottom or vice versa, using a rolling or sweeping motion (similar to a scooping motion). This technique is used on all tooth surfaces, including those facing the lips, cheeks, palate, and tongue. 4) Bass technique – starts from the gum line by inserting the toothbrush bristles into the spaces between the teeth. This movement targets areas that are difficult to reach, such as the spaces between teeth (Bok & Lee, 2020).

The majority of students had good knowledge of proper tooth-brushing techniques. However, some students were unable to answer questions related to brushing the surfaces facing the palate, the

chewing surfaces, the surfaces facing the tongue and cheeks, how to clean the tongue surface, and which areas besides the teeth should also be brushed. This study is consistent with the research by Harapan (2021), which stated that the post-test results of fourth- and fifth-grade students at SDN Sonsilo showed that their knowledge of tooth-brushing techniques was in the good category. This occurred because students gained knowledge about oral and dental hygiene after receiving health education. The study also noted that most students previously neglected oral hygiene due to a lack of knowledge regarding dental and oral care.

Based on the explanation above, knowledge about oral and dental hygiene can be improved through health education activities. Although most students already have a good understanding of proper brushing techniques, reinforcement is still needed, particularly in brushing the areas facing the palate, the tongue, and the tongue surface. Therefore, a more interactive educational strategy using learning media is necessary. The use of engaging and easy-to-understand learning media can increase students' interest in learning, which is expected to positively influence their habits in maintaining oral and dental hygiene.

Dental and oral health education is a planned and structured effort aimed at encouraging individuals or community groups to change unhealthy behaviors related to oral hygiene into healthier ones. Delivering health information is more effective when conducted in an enjoyable learning atmosphere. Approaches that involve games can reduce students' tension, making it easier for them to absorb the information provided. This method aims to make the learning process more efficient and maintain students' interest in learning, especially when presenting relatively complex material (Rifky et al., 2024).

Flash cards are one of the learning media that can be used to enhance students' knowledge about dental and oral hygiene. Flash cards are educational tools consisting

of cards that contain images, text, or specific symbols. This medium helps students recall the information presented on the cards while stimulating their attention and learning interest, thereby supporting the effectiveness of the learning process (Wahyu et al., 2024). According to research conducted by Unika & Utami (2022), the knowledge and oral hygiene skills of second- and third-grade students at SDN 1 Blumbang Boyolali improved after receiving education using flash cards media.

Based on data analysis, it was found that the level of knowledge among third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding the use of toothpaste was categorized as good. This was evident from the students' ability to correctly answer questions related to toothpaste use, such as the function of toothpaste, the appropriate type of toothpaste to use, and the correct amount to apply.

Brushing teeth is the simplest way to maintain oral and dental hygiene. Good oral hygiene is not only achieved through proper brushing techniques and an understanding of brushing frequency and timing but also through knowledge of proper toothpaste use. In tooth brushing, toothpaste plays an important role in cleaning food residues that stick to the tooth surface. The toothpaste used should contain fluoride, as it contributes to the remineralization process of enamel. Fluoride also helps prevent the growth of acid-resistant cariogenic bacteria, such as *Streptococcus mutans*, by inhibiting acid production and the enzyme glucosyltransferase. According to Kemenkes RI (2023), children aged 5–9 years are classified as being in the childhood age group. For children over six years old, the appropriate amount of toothpaste to use is equivalent to the size of the toothbrush bristles being used (Purnomowati et al., 2022).

The majority of students had good knowledge regarding the use of toothpaste; however, some students were unable to

answer questions related to the function of toothpaste, the appropriate type of toothpaste to use, and the correct amount to apply. This study is consistent with the research conducted by Raisah et al. (2023), which stated that the knowledge of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri Ateuk, Aceh Besar Regency, regarding toothpaste use was categorized as good. Providing education plays an important role in refreshing students' prior knowledge so that their already good understanding can improve further after receiving educational intervention. The use of engaging and easy-to-understand learning media can increase students' interest in learning. Moreover, appropriate learning media also help develop students' habits in maintaining oral and dental hygiene (Fadilah et al., 2023).

Therefore, interactive learning approaches such as using flashcard media can be considered an effective and relevant educational strategy for promoting dental health at the elementary school level. Flash cards are designed in colorful formats that stimulate children's memory. They are educational cards containing images, text, or symbols and are considered more effective than conventional methods in improving children's knowledge about oral and dental health. The main advantage of this medium lies in its ability to clarify the learning material through a combination of visuals and text, making it easier for students to understand the subject matter.

Based on data analysis, it was found that the level of knowledge among third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding toothbrush selection was categorized as good. This was evident from the students' ability to correctly answer questions related to choosing the right toothbrush. The assessed aspects included how to select a good toothbrush, the reason for using a small brush head, the most suitable type of bristles, and the reason why hard bristles are not recommended.

Based on the explanation above, choosing a toothbrush may seem simple, but it plays an important role in maintaining

optimal oral and dental hygiene. Therefore, understanding the proper criteria for toothbrush selection—including identifying the characteristics of a good toothbrush, using a small brush head, and choosing the appropriate type of bristles—needs to be improved to ensure safe and effective use.

Brushing teeth is the simplest way to maintain oral and dental hygiene. Good oral hygiene is not only achieved through proper brushing techniques, understanding the correct frequency and timing of brushing, and appropriate use of toothpaste, but also through selecting the right toothbrush. The characteristics of toothbrushes for adults and children differ. A suitable toothbrush for children should have a small head to fit the size of the mouth and reach all areas inside it. The tip of the brush head should be rounded to reduce the risk of injuring the soft tissues of the mouth. The bristles should be soft to ensure the gums and other soft tissues remain protected. Toothbrushes should be replaced every three months or when the bristles no longer feel comfortable to prevent gum injury (Dwimega, 2021).

The majority of students demonstrated good knowledge regarding toothbrush selection; however, some students were unable to answer questions related to how to choose a proper toothbrush, the reason for using a small brush head, and the most suitable type of bristles. This study is consistent with the findings of Budiasri & Yusnida (2023), which stated that the knowledge of first- and second-grade students at SDN I Rantau Tijing regarding toothbrush selection was categorized as good. This occurred because students gained knowledge about toothbrush selection after receiving health education.

The success of dental health education among school children is influenced by the teaching methods and the use of learning media. Media play an important role in supporting the learning process and helping students understand the

material more easily. One type of media that can be used is flash cards. The use of media in health education can help change children's mindsets and increase their knowledge about oral and dental health (Nurrochman et al., 2023). According to research conducted by Rohmah & Susilowati (2024), the knowledge of first-, second-, and third-grade students at SDN Noyosutan Karangrejo, Ketawangrejo, Grabag District, Purworejo, Central Java, regarding dental health improved after receiving education using flash cards.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study aims to determine the level of knowledge of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya about proper tooth-brushing techniques using Flash Cards. The results of the study showed that the knowledge of third-grade students at SDN Mojo I Surabaya regarding the frequency and timing of tooth brushing, proper brushing techniques, use of toothpaste, and selection of toothbrushes after health education using Flash Cards media was in the good category.

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