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Effects of Mother's Education on Use of Preventive Oral Health Services and Child's Dental Caries in Taiwan

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Introduction

Mothers with low education level displayed lower level of oral health-related knowledge, which can contribute to fewer use of preventive services and child's poorer oral health outcomes. We analyzed the effects of mother's education on utilization of prevention health services and dental caries in pre-school children.

Method

A large scale survey of children aged 3-5 was conducted in Taipei City in 2011. A total of 33,671 mothers completed the self-administered questionnaire, and their children finished oral examination. Of them, 1.73 percent (n=583) had an education level below high school defined as low education level (LEL), and other distributions of experience, basic information and knowledge of caries prevention are shown in Table 1. Regression models analyzed the association between children's caries and preventive oral health among mothers with LEL.


Result

Table 2 shows nearly 70% of LEL mothers did not know that fluoride varnish can prevent decay. Frequency of use of fluoride varnish was lowest (36.4%) in LEL mothers, followed by high school and college graduated mothers (46.4% and 56.2%, respectively). The association between fluoride varnish when dental visit and mother educational level are shown in Table 3. Table 4 shows LEL mothers who were aware that government provide free fluoride varnish services for children under 6 years old (adjusted OR=0.61, 95% CI=0.39-0.96) and active take their child to have fluoride varnish applied (adjusted OR=0.44, 95% CI=0.30-0.66) was less likely to have carious teeth.

Conclusions

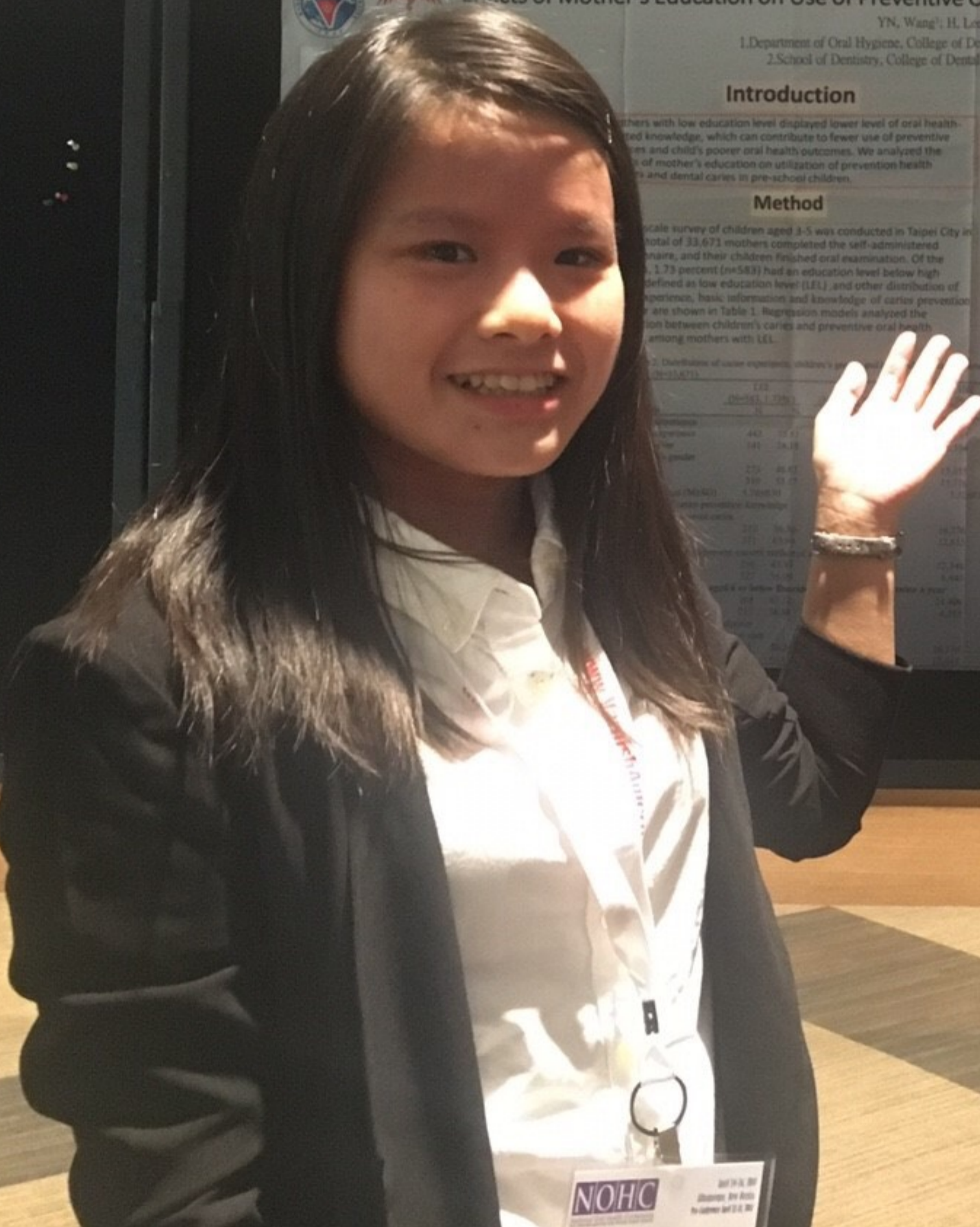
Lower use of preventive oral health services were found in children with LEL mothers. The results suggest that oral health promotion strategies need to be targeted to mothers from disadvantaged background.

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Variable	N	%	N	% of N	OR (95% CI)
Mother educational level			16,176	47.99 (1.00)	
NEE	12,615	40.52	1,895	14.83 (1.47)	(1.28-1.87)
LEL	571	2.43	212	37.13 (2.34)	(1.89-2.66)

Variable	Carious (n=281)	Caries exp. (n=442)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)
Children's gender				
Girl	148 (52.7)	205 (46.3)	1.00	1.00
Boy	133 (47.3)	237 (53.7)	1.07 (0.73-1.57)	1.07 (0.73-1.59)
Children's age (M±SD)	3.11 (0.38)	3.44 (0.52)	1.44 (1.28-1.79)	1.48 (1.13-1.92)
Fluoride varnish prevention knowledge				
Non-aware	19 (6.8)	62 (14.0)	1.00	1.00
Aware	262 (93.2)	380 (86.0)	0.27 (0.19-0.39)	0.29 (0.21-0.42)
Fluoride varnish use prevent decay when dental visit				
Non-use	75 (26.7)	232 (52.5)	1.00	1.00
Use	206 (73.3)	210 (47.5)	0.37 (0.28-0.49)	0.38 (0.29-0.50)
Government provide aged 6 or below fluoride varnish application when a visit				
Non-aware	27 (9.6)	136 (30.6)	1.00	1.00
Aware	254 (90.4)	306 (69.4)	0.77 (0.60-0.97)	0.81 (0.63-1.04)
Parents active preventive behavior				
Fluoride varnish when dental visit				
Use	138 (49.1)	195 (44.1)	1.00	1.00
Non-use	143 (50.9)	247 (55.9)	0.59 (0.45-0.78)	0.64 (0.49-0.84)



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