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# The Level of Awareness among Preparatory School Pupils regarding Health Culture, as Perceived by their Teachers (a Field Study on Preparatory School Teachers)

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# The Level of Awareness among Preparatory School Pupils regarding Health Culture, as Perceived by their Teachers (a Field Study on Preparatory School Teachers)

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#### **Abstract:**

This study aimed to identify the extent of awareness of preparatory school pupils about health culture from the point of view of their teachers, as the researchers attempted to use the most appropriate descriptive approach for the study, and relied on the health culture scale "Ghada Makhamara Kamal Khalil Younes" (2020) as a tool for collecting data, as the study sample consisted of (80) male and female teachers at the preparatory level of the Education Directorate in Ain Defla Province, who were selected randomly. The results of the study showed, based on the statistical software SPSS that there is a level of awareness of preparatory school pupils of health culture from the point of view of their teachers.

#### **Keywords:**

Health culture, personal culture, proper nutrition, first aid, school environment.

# The problematic:

The tremendous development that the world is witnessing today in all areas of life has increased the responsibility of educational institutions, especially in early education institutions. The educational process may aim to help pupils achieve their potential, build their personalities, enable them to establish human relationships and increase their social interaction. These responsibilities may require that the pupil enjoy good health and that educational institutions continuously seek to preserve the latter's health and improve it (Makhamra, 2020). Besides, the primary education stage may be considered the basic stage in the lives of pupils, which may be in dire need of sound and correct information, as children need to acquire knowledge that improves their health and growth and protects them from various common diseases. Nowadays, the role of preparatory school teachers is no longer limited to transferring knowledge to pupils through memorization and indoctrination. Today, preparatory

school teachers have multiple roles, the most important of which is providing pupils with concepts of health culture and positive behaviors to maintain the safety and health of the student. A study (Makhamra, 2020) aimed to identify the role of teachers of the lower primary stage (1-4) in educating pupils about the concepts of health culture. The results of the study showed that the role of teachers of the lower primary stage (1-4) in educating pupils about the concepts of health culture from their point of view was at an average level in all its fields, as health culture may be considered inspiring to the child with information, knowledge and health practices related to hygiene, food, security and safety and reaching the stage of applying that information and knowledge through activities. It may also be considered a means of developing health awareness, which is considered a criterion for the advancement and development of the nation. The term is no longer just conversations or lessons, but rather an educational process through which the individual is equipped with information and experiences in order to influence the knowledge of his tendencies and behavior in terms of his health and the health of the individuals around him. This was confirmed through a study conducted by (Namil, 2020), which aimed to identify the role of preparatory school teachers in the concepts of health culture in light of certain variables. The results of the study showed that the role of preparatory school teachers in providing preparatory school children with the concepts of health culture was high, so the aim of the study consists in providing preparatory school pupils with the concepts of health culture. Based on the above, this stud attempts to raise the following questions:

- How aware are preparatory school pupils of health culture from a health perspective based on teachers' standpoint?
- What is the status of the levels of health culture dimensions for students from the perspective of their teachers?

## **Study hypotheses:**

There is a level of awareness of preparatory school pupils regarding health culture from the point of view of their teachers.

# **Study objectives:**

The study aimed to:

- Identify the level of awareness of preparatory school pupils of health culture from the point of view of their teachers.
- Discern the arrangement of the levels of health culture dimensions for pupils from the point of view of their teachers.

# Importance of the study:

The importance of the study is theoretical and applied.

# First: The theoretical importance of the study:

This study focuses on preparatory school pupils, considering that this stage has its own special importance and distinguished position in relation to subsequent educational stages, due to the important role it plays in shaping the child's personality and helping acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to form habits, values, and attitudes in the field of health culture.

- Enriching educational experiences and delivering them to preparatory school pupils in an easy and smooth manner.

- The contribution of this study to reaching scientific facts about the concepts of health culture and verifying their validity.

**Second: Practical importance:** The concrete importance of the study stems from the following:

The results of this study are from teachers and professors of all schools, especially the ones studied, to enhance their strengths and employ that in their study plans as well as administrative and educational activities.

It is expected to benefit society with the importance of adhering to the concepts of health culture and accustoming pupils to them and practicing them in their daily lives.

- Building a new generation that is aware and has healthy, scientific habits since childhood.

#### **Defining concepts**

#### Technical definition of health culture:

It is "the individual's acquisition of information that is consistent with his level of thinking, so that he becomes able to understand and perceive the health conditions that are beneficial to him, and makes him cooperate with the health matters that are happening around him." (Badah et al., 2019, p. 14)

#### Operational definition of health culture

It is the degree that an individual obtains in the health culture scale of Ghada Kamal Khalil Younis Makhamra (2020), which consists of (30) items and (5) dimensions represented by personal hygiene, proper nutrition, accident prevention and first aid, in addition to diseases and how to prevent them, in addition to the school environment.

#### **Definition of health awareness:**

Some definitions of health awareness have emerged, including a committee of experts from the World Health Organization, which claims that: "Convincing people and supporting practices that will lead them to live a healthy life, use the health services available to them wisely, and make their own decisions, whether individually or collectively, to improve their health status." (Al-Hanfawi, 2016, p. 133)

Health awareness is also defined as: "the most important part of health care that is concerned with improving successful and effective health behavior that makes the information given easy to understand and use in daily life, which changes or makes health habits of the person and society for the better." (Al-Khatib, 2015, p. 28)

#### **Previous studies:**

The studies proposed are divided into the ones conducted by Arab and foreign researchers.

#### **Arabic Studies:**

Study by Najm, Thajil Laila (2021): The role of educational and recreational activities in raising preparatory school children's awareness of healthy culture concepts from the perspective of teachers and mothers; the aim of this study was to identify the role of educational and recreational activities in raising preparatory school children's awareness of health culture concepts from the teachers' point of view, as well as to identify the extent of preparatory school children's awareness of health culture concepts from their mothers' point of view, and to identify the role of educational and recreational activities in raising preparatory school children's awareness of health culture concepts from the teachers' point of view according to

the service variable "10 years and under", "11 - and over" and the variable "working mothers and non-working mothers". In order to achieve the higher research objectives, the researcher built a scale for the role of educational and recreational activities in raising preparatory school children's awareness of health culture concepts based on the theoretical framework and the previous study. The researcher found that Al-Dakhil (2002) was known for building the scale prepared for the case study, as the scale initially consisted of 36 paragraphs distributed over five areas.

Another study by "Makhmara Ghada Kamal Khalil Younis (2020): The role of primary school teachers (1-4) in raising pupils' awareness of health culture concepts aimed to identify the teachers of the lower primary stage in raising pupils' awareness of the concepts of health culture in the Directorate of Education and ways to improve it from the teachers' point of view. The study sample consisted of all teachers of the lower primary stage from (1-4) and female teachers in the Directorate of Education from the second semester to the academic year 2019-2020, numbering 582 male and female teachers, of whom 236, representing 40% of the study sample, where a study tool was distributed to them. The researcher used the descriptive analytical method and a questionnaire consisting of 30 paragraphs distributed over five areas, the validity and reliability of which were confirmed using appropriate statistical methods.

Study by Namil Randa Rasmi Al-Abed (2020): The role of preparatory school teachers in providing preparatory school children with health culture **concepts:** The research aimed to identify the role of preparatory schoolteachers in acquiring the concepts of health culture for preparatory schoolchildren in light of some variables: the location of the kindergarten, the teacher's specialization, and the number of years of experience. The researcher used a descriptive survey method and utilized the questionnaire as a tool for collecting data. The questionnaire included three areas, each area consisting of 13 paragraphs. The first area included personal hygiene, the second area included healthy nutrition, and the third area included environmental health due to its natural suitability and the objectives of this study. The study sample consisted of 101 preparatory schoolteachers from the age of 4-5 years affiliated with the Third Amman Directorate of Special Education; teachers were selected randomly. The results of the study showed that the role of preparatory schoolteachers lies in teaching the concepts of health culture was high, as these areas were embodied as follows: the area of healthy nutrition in first place, the area of personal hygiene in second place, and in the second place. And in the last place was the area of the environment.

#### **\*** Foreign studies:

Study by Louis Persson, (2017) health promotion in Swedish schools managers' views: the study showed that schools are recognized around the world as places to promote health and leadership has an impact on the ability of schools to promote health and school principals have a great influence on what priorities are set in the school which in turn affects the performance of pupils and their school health.

There is a lack of research on school principals' views on health promotion and what they consider essential to health promotion and so the aim was to examine the views of school principals on what health promotion in schools may entail, then an

exploratory design and qualitative content analysis was conducted using in-depth interviews with all 13 school principals in a medium-sized municipality in central Sweden. The analysis had explicit and implicit content and 10 subcategories emerged. The theme "New learning and life opportunities" describes the latent content of these categories, and the theme "Good education and life opportunities" describes the latent content of these categories. Taking the views of school principals into account is important because these views help to form a more complete picture of how school principals work with health promotion and what is needed for health promotion to improve pupils' opportunities for learning and good life.

Study by Irshad, Hussain, Muhammad Ahmad Alamgir, Muhammad Shahzad (2014) on health education and its needs for elementary school pupils which showed that health education especially in primary schools is a neglected area in Pakistan. This study investigated the health education needs of primary school pupils. The study adopted a mixed research approach (qualitative and quantitative) to collect data. Quantitative data was collected by administering a questionnaire to 400 primary school pupils. The response rate was 80% with 328 responses completed. The same participants were also interviewed in a group of 4-6 pupils. The data was then analyzed. While the objective interviews were analyzed, overall 68% of primary school pupils sought information about the main structures of health education. 77% were interested in getting awareness about common diseases and puberty issues. The findings of the study seem to be in line with the social context of Pakistan. Primary school pupils were only aware of basic data of health education and needed awareness especially regarding food, nutrition, hygiene, seasonal and tropical diseases and diseases. Infectious and psychological problems.

#### **Comment on previous studies:**

Previous studies have confirmed the development of health culture among preparatory school pupils, and some studies have shown that pupils practice unhealthy habits at medium to high rates. These studies have somewhat similar goals. The studies of "Laila Najm Thajil, 2021", the study of "Randa Rasmi Nimil, 2020", the study of "Khalil Kamal, 2020", and also the study of "2014, Hussain Alhagi" and the study "Persson, 2017 Louis" to identify the role of educational and recreational activities in raising a child's awareness of health culture concepts from the point of view of teachers, as well as to identify the extent of a child's awareness of health culture concepts from the point of view of their teachers. Previous studies varied in terms of methods, as the study "Laila Najm Thajil, 2021" used a descriptive method, and the study "Randa Rasmi Nimil, 2020" used a descriptive health method. The study "Ghada, Khalil Kamal, 2020" used a descriptive analytical method, while foreign studies such as the study 2014 Hussain Alangir used a qualitative quantitative method. The study "Louis Persson, 2017" used a comprehensive survey method.

Previous studies used the following tools such as the questionnaire as a study tool such as the study of "Laila Najm Kamal, 2021", the study of "Randa Rasmi Nimil 2020", the study of "Ghada Kamal, 2020", as well as the study of "2014 Hessain Alarmgin", while the study of "2017 Louis Persson" used the interview as a study tool.

In terms of the study sample, the current study agreed with previous studies by adopting preparatory school pupils as a sample for a study such as the study of Hussain Alangir While other studies relied on preparatory school teachers as a research sample, such as the study of Ghada Kamal Khalil Younes and the study of Randa Rasmi Namil. On the other hand, the study of Laila Najm Thajil 2021 combined preparatory school teachers and mothers of pupils. In terms of the results of Laila Najm Thajil's study, children's awareness of health culture concepts is significant, as the arithmetic averages of the sample members' responses to the scale paragraphs in the language (11, 144), which is a very large arithmetic average from the teachers' point of view, while the results of the study of Randa Rasmi Namil 2020 showed that there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance (a = 0.05) in the role of preparatory schoolteachers in acquiring preparatory schoolchildren's concepts of health culture in terms of the number of years of experience. The results also showed that there were no statistically significant individual differences at the level of significance (a = 0.05), while the results of the study of Ghada Kamal Khalil 2020 showed that the role of primary school teachers (1 - 4) in educating pupils With the concepts of health culture, the results showed that there were no statistically significant differences at the significance level of (0.05)between the averages of the estimates of the teachers of the primary stage (1-4) for their role in educating pupils about the concepts of health culture.

### Similarities and differences between previous studies and the current study

The Arab studies were similar to the current study in methodology, as they all followed a descriptive approach.

Most of the previous studies, as well as the current study, used a questionnaire as a study tool, such as the study of Laila Najm Thajil 2021, the study of Randa Rasmi Nimil 2021, the study of Ghada Kamal 2020, and also the foreign study such as the study of Hussain Alangir, 2014 and Louis Persson's study, 2017

Previous studies were similar to the current study in terms of the study sample, as it adopted preparatory school pupils as a study sample.

Foreign studies differed from our current study in the methodology, as the study used Hussain Alangir, 2014 Quantitative approach The study of Louis Persson, 2017, was unique in the approach it followed, as it followed the comprehensive survey approach. Also, the study of Louis Persson, 2017, differed in the study tool, as it used the interview as a tool. The study of Laila Najm Thajil 2021 differed, as they did not use the same study sample with previous studies and the current study.

#### Study method:

In this study, the researchers used the descriptive approach in order to know the extent of awareness of preparatory school pupils about health culture from the point of view of their teachers, which is the appropriate and best approach for such studies. Considering that the latter depends on studying the phenomenon at the present time and as it is in reality,

## Survey study:

The exploratory study consisted of 30 male and female teachers teaching in preparatory classes in the Khemis Miliana area. They were selected randomly, and

the tool was distributed to them in order to verify the psychometric properties of the study's performance.

#### Study community:

The study community consists of all preparatory level teachers in the Khemis Miliana and Miliana regions for the academic year 2023-2024, and their number reached 107. Professors, male and female, including 66 professors in Khemis Miliana and 41 professors in Miliana.

Table (1): Represents the community in terms of districts

Gender	Female teachers	Male teachers	percentage
Region			
Khemis Miliana District	63	3	61.68%
Miliana Province	41	0	38.31%

From the table, we notice that the number of school teachers in the Khemis Miliana district is greater than the number of teachers in the Miliana district, and the percentage of female teachers is greater than the percentage of male teachers in the Khemis Miliana district, while in the Miliana district there are no male preparatory school teachers.

#### **Study sample:**

The study sample consisted of 80 male and female professors teaching in preparatory schools, and they were selected randomly.

**Table (2):** Represents the sample in terms of gender

Variable	Variable levels	number	percentage
Gender	male	3	3.75%
	feminine	77	96.25%

It is clear from the table that the number of female professors, estimated at 77, equivalent to 96.25%, is much more than the number of male professors, estimated at 3, equivalent to 3.75%.

**Table (3):** Represents the sample in terms of academic qualification

Variable	Variable levels	Number	Percentage
Academic qualification	Bachelor's degree	59	73.75%
	Master	21	26.25%

We note from the table that the number of professors who hold an academic qualification (Bachelor's), estimated at 59 professors and equivalent to 73.75%, is more than the number of professors who hold Master's degree, estimated at 21 professors, equivalent to 26.25%.

**Table (4):** Represents the sample in terms of years of experience

Variable	Variable levels	Number	Percentage
Years of	Less than 5 years	20	25%
experience	From 5 to 10 years	40	50%

More than 10 years	20	25%
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We note that professors with 5 to 10 years of experience, equivalent to 50%, are more than other professors, while professors with less than 5 years of experience and more than 10 years are equal in number, equivalent to 25%.

#### **Research tool:**

The researchers used the health literacy scale of "Makhmara Ghada Kamal Younis (2020). The scale contained 30 items distributed over five dimensions: the first dimension measures personal hygiene, the second dimension measures proper nutrition, the third dimension measures accident prevention and first aid, the fourth dimension measures diseases and how to prevent them, and the fifth dimension measures the school environment. Thus, all questionnaire items contribute to measuring the extent of preparatory school pupils' awareness of health culture from the point of view of their teachers.

#### **Correction key:**

The researchers used a questionnaire prepared using the five-point Likert method, and the questionnaire was corrected so that the answer was given as "agree" to a very large degree (5) degrees, "agree" to a large degree (4) degrees, "agree" to a medium degree (3) degrees, "a little degree" to a small degree (2), and "a little degree" to a very small degree (1).

The psychometric properties of the study tool were determined by calculating validity in the following ways:

- **The veracity of the arbitrators** The agreement standard has been adopted.80%) This indicates that it is a valid measure.
- internal consistency The Pearson correlation coefficient was strong, indicating the validity of the instrument in measuring what it was intended to do.

The method of calculating reliability was as follows: Calculation using Cronach's alpha, which was 0.85, indicating that the questionnaire was highly reliable and could be relied upon to achieve the objectives.

# Psychometric properties of the health literacy scale in the current study:

The psychometric properties of the scale were verified by applying it to a sample of professors consisting of 30 professors, male and female.

Validity of the scale in the current study The method of one-way comparison was used to verify the validity of the scale.

# Validity by the method of comparative analysis:

The average scores of the survey sample members whose scores represent 27% Of the higher degrees and those whose degrees represent 27% From the lowest scores on the scale, this is to test the scale's ability to distinguish between different levels of health culture among sample members. The results were as follows:

Table No. (05): Significance of the differences between the means of the two extreme groups of the survey sample members

Sample	Lower	Group	Higher C	Group	Value	P-value	Degrees of	Level of
	(n - 8)		(n - 8)		of "t"	Sig	Freedom	Significance
Criterion	Н	L	Н	L				
Total Degree	96.50	8.31	131.50	4.10	10.67	0.00	14	0.01

It is clear from Table No. (05) that: the value of "T", which reached 10.67, is statistically significant at the level of 0.01, indicating that the scale has the ability to discriminate between the two extreme groups, which is considered an indicator of its validity.

**Scale stability in the current study:** Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to verify the reliability of the scale.

#### **Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient:**

This equation was chosen because individuals' responses to the scale's statements were based on a five-point scale, and the following table shows the value of the scale's reliability coefficient.

Table No. (06): Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the health culture scale

Overall degree of health literacy Scale	Number of paragraphs	Stability coefficient value
interacy Scale	30	0.84

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale as a whole was 0.84, which means that the scale has a good degree of reliability.

#### Statistical methods:

The researchers used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences to analyze the study data after applying the tool to the study sample individuals. The following statistical treatments were used:

- Arithmetic means and standard deviation.
- The method of comparison of ends to verify the validity of the scale.
- Cronbach's alpha test to determine the reliability of the scale items.

Presentation and analysis of the results in light of the main hypothesis: The level of awareness of preparatory school pupils of health culture from the point of view of their teachers is high.

The arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the sample individuals' scores on the scale were calculated, and the arithmetic mean was compared to the Likert scale items. The following areas represent the Likert scale items that were relied upon in the current study:

(1-2.59) low level, (2.60-3.39) medium level, (3.40-5) high level, and the results are summarized in the following table:

Table No. (07): The level of awareness of preparatory school pupils of health culture from the point of view of their teachers

Health culture	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Level
Health Culture	Ariumenc mean	Standard deviation	Level

3.79	0.47	High

From Table (07), it is clear that the arithmetic mean values of the sample members' responses fall within the range 3.40-5 which indicates high level, The standard deviation of their scores, which was 0.47 It is considered an indicator of the similarity of their scores and their tendency towards the average, which is considered an indicator of the agreement of their opinions and the similarity of their responses.

Therefore, it can be said that the level of awareness of preparatory school pupils about health culture from the point of view of their teachers is high.

# Presentation and analysis of the results in light of the sixth hypothesis: Arranging the dimensions of health culture among preparatory school pupils from the point of view of their teachers.

To answer the question, the arithmetic mean of the sample members' scores on the scale dimensions was calculated, and the dimensions were arranged according to the arithmetic mean values from the largest mean to the smallest mean.

The results are summarized in the following table:

Table No. (13): Ranking of health culture dimensions among preparatory school pupils from the point of view of their teachers

Criteria	Arithmetic mean	Arrangement
Personal hygiene	3.87	02
Proper nutrition	3.79	03
Accident prevention and first aid	3.57	05
Diseases and how to prevent them	3.95	01
School environment	3.75	04

We note from Table (13) that the dimension of diseases and how to prevent them was in first place with an arithmetic mean of 3.95, followed by personal hygiene with an arithmetic mean of 3.87, then proper nutrition with an arithmetic mean of 3.79, then the school environment with an arithmetic mean of 3.75, and finally accident prevention and first aid with an arithmetic mean of 3.57.

# Discussion of hypotheses:

After conducting this study, which aimed to determine the extent of preparatory school pupils' awareness of health culture concepts from the point of view of their teachers, the researchers reached the following conclusions:

The level of pupils' awareness of health culture from a point of viewTheir teachers' view was high in all areas, which indicates that health culture and health education are the effective means and main tool in improving the level of health of the individual and society from epidemics, infectious diseases and problems of the surrounding environment. The preparatory stage for the child is one of the most important educational stages that he goes through, as it is a decisive stage in shaping the foundations of his growth in various aspects. Therefore, the school is currently

directing its attention to providing health services to pupils. These services include supervising the physical and mental health of pupils and providing them with the necessary health culture. (Makhamra, 2020, p. 25)

School is a place where children can transmit infections, germs and diseases and carry them with them to their homes. Therefore, it is necessary to educate them about diseases and how to prevent them by spreading health awareness and knowledge among families, and encouraging them to follow sound health practices to prevent various diseases that affect children, focusing on combating various diseases that affect children and that can be prevented, such as infections and diarrhea. Among the ways to prevent infectious diseases by combating the cause of these diseases is ensuring cleanliness and fighting ignorance and bad habits in health and using medicines and treatment.

The results of the study showed that the level of awareness of preparatory school pupils about personal hygiene was high, as it is the means of maintaining good health, through which germs are reduced and the risk of disease is reduced. Awareness is achieved by encouraging the child to pay attention to personal hygiene and teaching them to distinguish between good and bad habits. (Eid, Al-Mustarihi, 2022, p. 91)

The results of this study are consistent with what was confirmed by a study by Alttaghi et al, 2014 in the aspects of children's awareness of personal hygiene and physical activities, and it also agrees with the results of the study "Elissa et al, 2015" in the field of emphasizing the importance of children practicing sports and physical activity by practicing it in an educated manner on a daily basis.

The level of awareness in the field of healthy nutrition was high, and thus the awareness of preparatory school pupils was high, as healthy nutrition is the basis for the child's survival and growth, as children who receive good nutrition have a better ability to grow, learn, play and participate in their communities. Therefore, they were made aware of following healthy and appropriate eating habits and eating a healthy meal and meals with various elements such as: vegetables, fruits, poultry and fish, and maintaining a healthy and integrated meal in an organized manner daily and adhering to the etiquette of the subject in terms of sitting and using scientific tools. This was confirmed by (Al-Hariri, 2013) that the foundations on which the preparatory school curriculum is based are following up on the child's nutrition because nutrition at this stage is very important due to its direct impact on rapid growth and its requirements based on healthy nutrition.

The results of this study are consistent with what was confirmed by Alyssa et al, 2015, which pointed out the importance of proper nutrition and the importance of eating healthy meals.

The results also showed that the level of awareness of teachers for preparatory school pupils in the field of school environment was high, through increasing environmental awareness through the environmental behaviors they practice inside and outside the school, preserving property both inside and outside the school, avoiding littering, and following security and safety rules in dealing with the place.

(Sharif, 2022) points out the importance of increasing the environmental awareness of preparatory schoolchildren through the environmental behaviors they practice inside and outside the kindergarten.

Finally, the level of awareness was high in the field of prevention. From accidents and first aid, by educating preparatory school pupils to follow safety and security procedures when dealing with electrical devices and using sports tools in a proper way, such as: playing with cubes and playing with scissors to cut papers, providing safe and proper traffic instructions when crossing the street, mentioning the contents of the first aid kit and learning about preventive methods.

"Niswan and Abu Qamar 2004" also confirmed that raising children and developing them in a safe manner is essential, so they must be raised in a preventive and healthy manner and their safety must be preserved from disasters.

Accordingly, we say that the awareness of preparatory school pupils about health hygiene from the point of view of their teachers was high.

#### General conclusion:

From this we conclude that the level of awareness of preparatory school pupils of health culture from the point of view of their teachers was high in all five areas: the area of diseases and how to prevent them, personal hygiene, proper nutrition, the school environment. And finally in the area of accident prevention and first aid.

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