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Development and initial validation of the Oral health activities questionnaire

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Statement of the problem: The purpose of this study was to introduce a new Oral Health Activities Questionnaire (OHAQ, hereinafter) that examines different activities and behaviours related to the oral hygiene regimen of each analysed subject.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: A sample of 658 students was analysed to determine the OHAQ scale's basic metric characteristics. To determine the construct validity of the OHAQ, descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, as well as differences testing, were applied to groups of subjects on the basis of self-reported oral status measures.

Findings: The dimensions of oral health activities were determined, and the scales for their measurement were constructed. Females and males differed in the OHAQ questionnaire measures. Significant but low inter-correlations were found among the measures. In the female and male subsample, four different oral health (OH, hereinafter) types of subjects were identified, exhibiting different characteristic behaviours regarding oral health. OHAQ scales showed good discriminant validity, revealing the differences related to specific self-reported oral status measures (e.g., frequency of toothache and the number of filled teeth).

Conclusion & Significance: The OHAQ represents a satisfactory measurement instrument for determining the level of OH activities and for doing quick and reliable classifications of the participating subjects according to their OH activities and behaviours. The process of further validation and advancements of the OHAQ scales and measures should be continued through a clinical examination of subjects.

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