

Oral health care seeking behavior among patients visiting dental clinics in rural and urban songea in tanzania

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Abstract

Oral care seeking behaviours can be described with data from information such as the time difference between the onset of illness and getting into contact with a dentist and reason for not seeking help. Dental care seeking behaviours include all behaviours associated with establishing and maintaining a healthy oral state and reducing impact and progression of a dental problem. Main problem in dental seeking behaviour is the late attendance to the clinic. This may be due to various reasons such as inaccessibility to dental care facility, lack of time, high cost of treatment, lack of awareness and ignorance. Objective of the study was to describe pattern of patient attendance and factors influencing oral treatment seeking behaviour among patients visiting dental clinics in rural and urban Songea. Descriptive cross-sectional was the study design used in this research. The study was conducted in dental clinics located in Songea Regional Hospital (located in Songea town) and Peramiho dental clinic (located in Peramiho village). All adult patients who attended dental clinic during the study period and agreed to participate in the study were the participant of the study. A sample size of 81 was recruited into the study and a self-administered questionnaire was used to collect study variables including; age, gender, residence, level of education, type of symptoms, accessibility to oral health centre and number of previous dental visit. To aid in data analysis, statistical package of social sciences version 16 was used. Means and percentages were computed and results were presented in form of text and graphs. A total of 81 patient participated in the study 36(44.4%) were males and 45(55.6%) were females. The mean age group was 16-35, minimum age was 18 and the maximum age was 78. Pain influenced 67.9% of the respondents to visit dental clinic. 25.9% of the respondent reported to perceive the cost of dental clinic as high and deterred them from seeking dental treatment. 63% had prior treatment to the same condition and 92.6% had visited dental clinic more than once. Oral health care seeking behaviour is high in female than males. Level of education is still low among the people living in Peramiho and Songea urban since high percentage is still in primary level education

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Biography

Winfred W Mgaya is a Dental Surgeon currently working in Aga Khan Hospital in Tanzania. He holds a bachelor degree in doctor of Dental Surgery from University of Muhimbili. Dr Winfred has 5 years of working as dental surgeon. He has also been involved in initiating several dental outreach programs in

Tanzania which aims at raising people's awareness on dental and oral health. He is a founder of a non government organization called Tanzania Oral Health Foundation which currently works on a school based program called Beyond Toothbrush which provides oral health education to school children aged 5-12. He is also an award winner in Tanzania Emerging Youth awards in the category of health care providers.