

Problems of Dental Health Care Services and Use in Ekiti State College of Health Sciences and Technology, Ijero Ekiti, Nigeria

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Abstract: Dental health services faces varied challenges in Nigeria today as the public gives little or no attention to dental health care. The authors identified various factors and problems facing the use of dental health care facility in the study area. This also covers the attitude of users (Mainly Students) to dental health care services despite being a health institution. We adopted a stratified sampling technique to select our sample while making use of primary and secondary data; revealing the statistics of patients recorded to have utilized dental health facility in the College from 2016-2019. One hundred and Ninety two (192) Questionnaires was administered to find out the problems and challenges of dental health care usage in the study area, a rating scale was designed and distributed to the dental health personnel in the clinic. Data obtained were analyzed using tables and graphical representations. The result revealed low utilization of dental health care facility in the study area; identified factors are lack of or poor awareness of the importance of dental health care which is the most identified factor, ignorance, unaffordable cost, painful procedure of dental health care services among others hence, there is need to improve on dental health care awareness as an essential health care service while also encouraging the government to subsidize dental health care services to make it affordable to users.

Key words: Problems, dental health, oral hygiene, Health facility

I. INTRODUCTION

Dental Health is a health care service rendered to patient seeking dental health care mostly due to dental health conditions or as a means of dental health medical check-up to forestall possible dental diseases. Dental care usage can be defined as the percentage of the population who access dental services over a Specified period of time[1]. Measures of actual dental care utilization describe the percentage of the population who has seen a dentist at different time intervals. Dental disease is a serious public health problem with universal distribution and affecting all age group [2]. However, despite this universal distribution, only a few seek dental care. Thus a wide gap is created between the actual dental needs of the population and the demand for dental care[3]. Although dentists agree that regular dental visits are essential for maintaining good oral health, national studies in the United States of America estimate that only 41-50% of all

Americans visit the dentist each year[4]. There are different dental diseases which are left untreated due to ignorance or other factors causing serious social stigma in the long run. Dental health problems or conditions are still much a public health issue in Nigeria compared to other developed nations. Oral health disparities refer to the existence of differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality and burden of oral diseases and other adverse health conditions as well as the use of health care services, among specific population groups[5]Cultural issues contributes mainly to oral health issues such as use of herbs for kids, consumption of foods that affects healthy growth of teeth in kids, lack of calcium etc. The sources of the barriers that the patient experience in relation to accessing oral health care are said to arise from their life experiences and psycho-social factors. These factors may include: age, gender, education, ethnicity, language, perception of need, anxiety states, and feeling of vulnerability [7]Others may include: cost of treatment, health status of the individual, disability, transportation, residence/ rurality, adequacy of dental workforce and beliefs and charisma of dental health care personnel[8]From this list of factors, four main groups of barriers have been identified. These are dental anxiety, expensive nature of dental treatment, perception of need and lack of access[9] In the recent times, reluctance of a cross-section of the public to utilize oral health care. There is an important difference between the need for oral health care and the demand for it. A good understanding of the barriers that prevent people from seeking appropriate and timely oral health intervention is important when designing outreach activities that would bridge the gap between the need for care and the amount of care sought[11]. The authors focused more on identifying reasons why dental health care services are not utilized in the study area.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study area is Ekiti State College of Health sciences and Technology located in Ijero Ekiti, Nigeria . It is an institution that produce middle health practitioner in the State and diaspora. Their Dental health facility is well equipped due to accreditation programs.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Students of dental health department were excluded from the research as they do visit the dental clinic for practical from time to time. All other departments were included before using stratified random sampling technique to select study sample.

The population of the study area is 3240 students as at the time of this research work, Authors used a stratified sampling technique where in the population was divided in to six strata [Faculty], in each faculty two [2] department were selected, sixteen [16] students were picked from each of the department selected from 100level – 400level.

S/N	FACULTY CODE	DEPARTMENT	LEVEL	SAMPLE
1.	FA	FA1 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		FA2 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		TOTAL =32	16	
2	FB	FB1 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		FB2 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		TOTAL = 32	16	
3	FC	FC1 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		FC2 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		TOTAL = 32	16	
4	FD	FD1 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		FD2 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		TOTAL = 32	16	
5	FE	FE1 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	

			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		FE2 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		TOTAL = 32	16	
6	FF	FF1 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		FF2 16	100 LEVEL 4	16
			200 LEVEL 4	
			300 LEVEL 4	
			400 LEVEL 4	
		TOTAL = 32	16	
	GRAND TOTAL		192	192

Questionnaire was adopted as the instrument for data collection while also using secondary data obtained from the health information department of the College health clinic, a rating scale was designed and distributed to the dental health personnel in the clinic. Pretest of the instrument was carried out on samples different from actual sample for the research work; the validity of the research instrument was carried out with result at 0.92. The results were analyzed using STATA MP12, descriptive analysis of data collected while also using a rating scale to measure dental health care services in the study area.

III. RESULTS

Total questionnaire was One hundred and Ninety two and they were personally administered by the authors and retrieved back.

S/N	VARIABLE	MEAN	MEDIAN
1	AGE OF RESPONDENTS	23.12±18.10	23.5

Table A. Data of Respondents

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
16-20	86	44.8%	FEMALE	122	63.5%
21-25	92	48%	MALE	70	36.5%
26-30	10	5.2%			
31 & above	4	2%			
TOTAL	192	100%	TOTAL	192	100%

Figure 1 Age of respondents

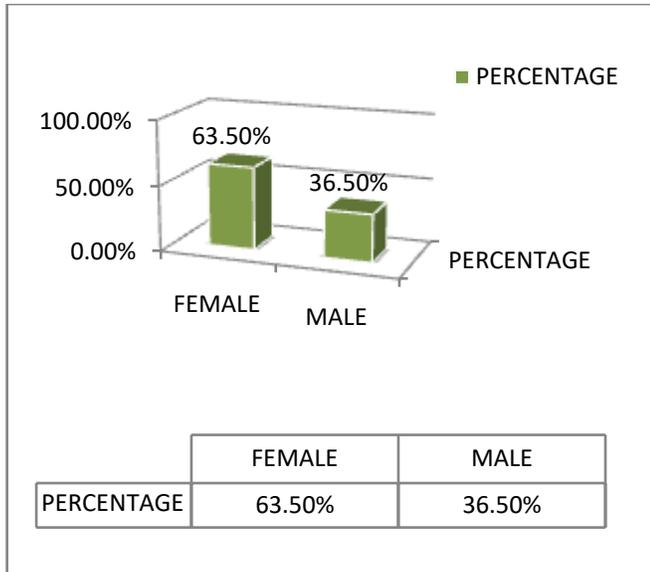


Table B. utilization of dental health facility in the study area

Do you utilize dental health facility in your college?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	4	2%
No	188	98%
TOTAL	192	100

Figure 2 showing utilization of dental health facility in the study area

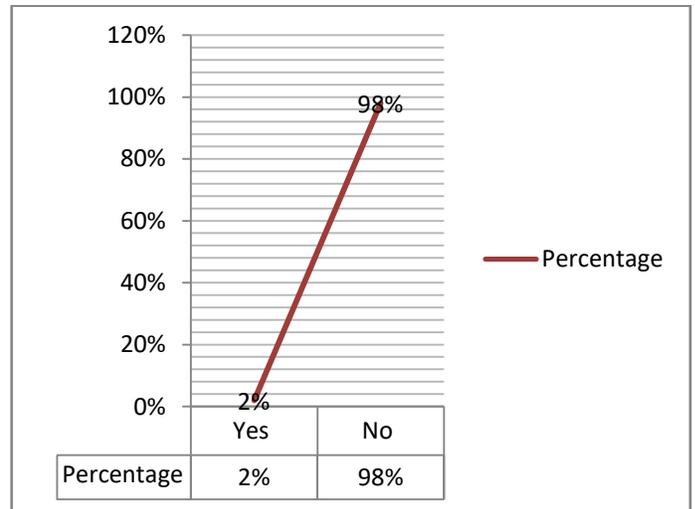


Table C: Reasons for Non Utilization

What do you think are the reasons why people do not utilize dental health facility in your school?	Frequency	Percentage
Painful dental health care procedure	48	25%
High cost	10	5.%
Dental health care is not essential like other health care	22	12%
Poor health awareness	93	48.8%
Health personnel unfriendly	15	8%
Don't know	4	2%
TOTAL	192	100

Figure 4 shows Reasons for Non Utilization

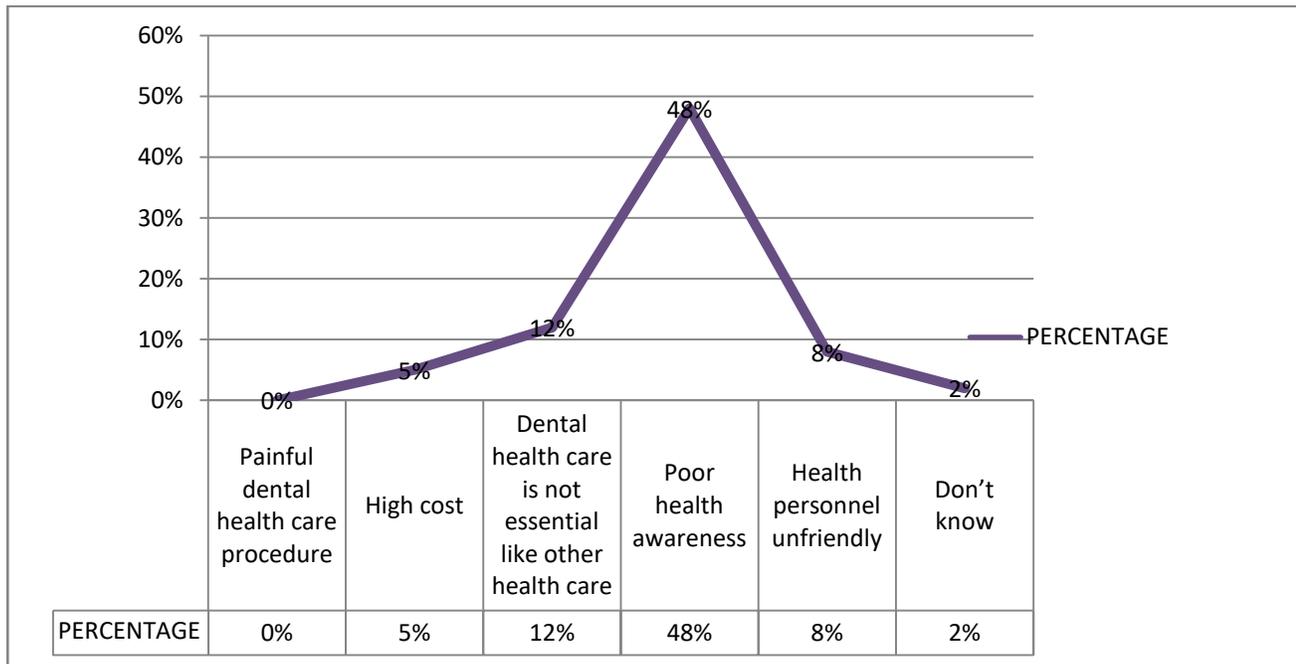
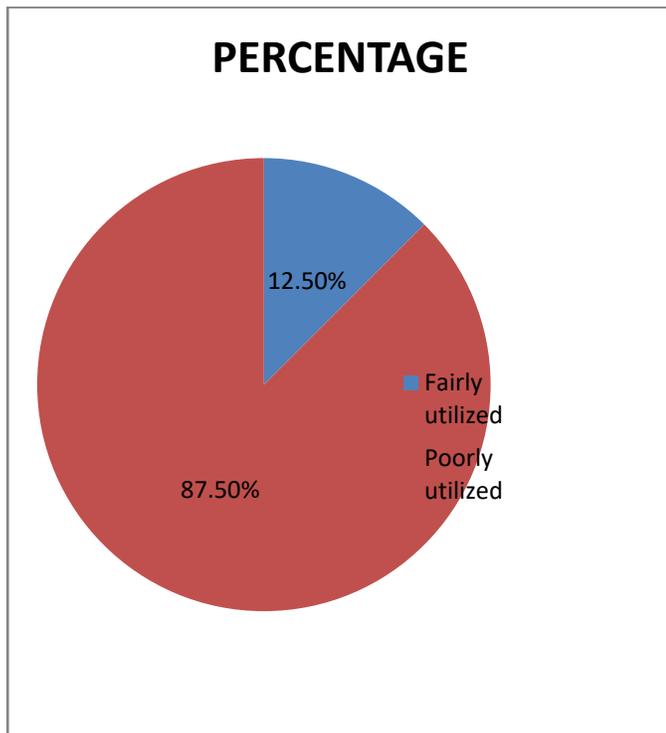


Table D: Rating Utilization of Dental health Utilization in the study area

Respondents are Dental health personnel’s in the clinic

S/N	VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Well utilized	0	0%
2	Fairly utilized	1	12.5%
3	Poorly utilized	7	87.5%
	TOTAL	8	100%

Figure 4 Rating Utilization of Dental health Utilization in the study area by Dental health personnel’s in the clinic.

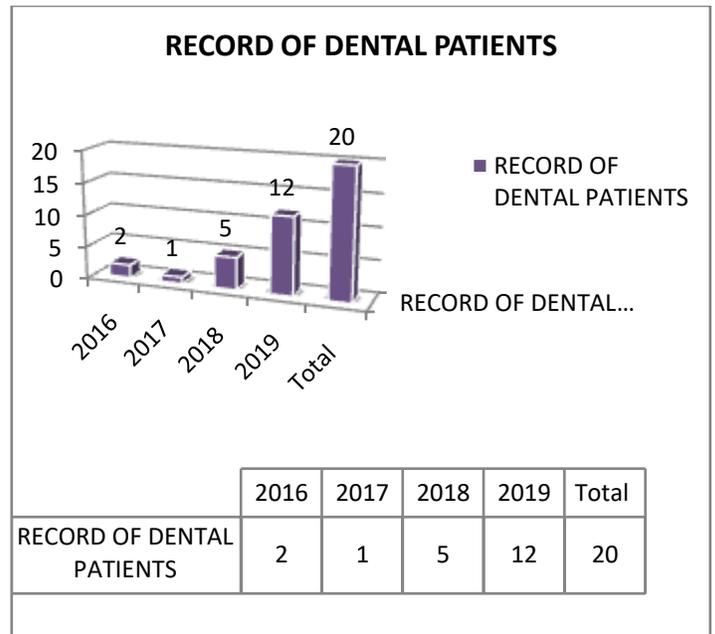


The above shows dental health care in the study area is poorly utilized.

Table E: data from Institution health center 2016- 2019

YEAR (JAN-DEC)	RECORD OF DENTAL PATIENTS	PERCENTAGE %
2016	02	10%
2017	01	5%
2018	05	25%
2019	12	60%
Total	20	100%

Figure 5 data showing utilization of dental health care facility from 2016-2019



IV. DISCUSSION

Most of the respondents are female indicating 63.5%. Most of the respondents did not visit the dental care facility in their institution, and the major reason for this is identified to be poor awareness about utilization of the health facility. During personal interview, it was discovered that respondents felt the need to visit dental health care center only when they are feeling pain of any kind in their mouth or teeth which is very uncommon according to them while few affirmed that dental health care should be sought not only when there are dental health problems but as a means of regular check-up to prevent possible dental health conditions. Other identified factors includes high cost of treatment, the stigma that comes with dental health care service among colleagues, painful treatment procedure, dental health care not so essential like other health care services among others. From the secondary data obtained from the institution health center from 2016 – 2019, more worrisome is that only student utilized dental health care facility in 2017. It was revealed that 20 students visited the dental health care center for treatment within 4years which showed evidently that students of the institution did not utilize the dental health care facility in the institution. It becomes more worrisome that health personnel n training did not see dental health care as essential though owing to factors identified, one cannot but wonder how community people or public react or their attitude towards dental health care.

V. CONCLUSION

From the findings of this research work, the author conclude that the level of utilizing dental health care facility in the study area is low and of major concern is wrong perception that dental health care services should be sought only when

there are dental health problems, symptoms or signs of pains, caries, halitosis etc. People has the mindset that they only need to visit dental health facility only because they have dental health challenges, some studies revealed that people believe dental health problems are not resources nor life threatening hence there are home remedy and traditional remedy for dental health challenges hence there are needs to prioritize health awareness program to effect a pattern of behavioral change of the public towards dental health care, there are needs to include dental health service in our countries' health scheme and programs with an holistic approach that strengthens dental health services, reduce exorbitant cost to make it affordable and accessible while also developing a blueprint to address the challenges of dental health utilization in Nigeria.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

R.A Okunade 40%, Victor SHEGUN Oluwatuyi 25%, Blessing Alagbada 20% , Mayowa Funmilayo Oluwatuyi 15%

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