

ABSTRACT

Background: Oral health is a fundamental component to general health, and is essential for individuals to enable them to communicate effectively, have a positive quality of life, and maintain self-esteem and social self-confidence as well as prevention of diseases. (Masoe et al, 2014). Oral diseases and conditions have increasingly become prevalent because of their high impact on individuals' social and economic daily life. (Machado et al 2012). Dental carries alone are reported among the high burden oral conditions with a prevalence ranging between 60% and 90% worldwide (WHO, 2015). In Uganda, dental diseases are reported to be rampant with a prevalence of 62.5% (Okullo et al 2015). The study assessed the factors affecting the uptake routine dental healthcare services among adults 18 years and above, at Mubende Regional Referral Hospital.

Methodology: The study was conducted at the Mubende Regional Referral Hospital dental outpatient Clinic in Mubende district. A descriptive cross-sectional study design was used to conduct this facility-based study, with a sample size of 138 respondents. The primary sample subjects were randomly selected and were adults (≥ 18 years) who attended MRRH at OPD.

Results: The study findings revealed that: 6 out of 138 which is around (4.35%) go regularly/routinely for dental checkup well as 64 (91.4%) go only when they have toothache or some other dental problem. Majority 3 (50%) of respondents who went for routine dental checkups were 28-37 years, 33.3% (2) were 18-27 years and 1 (16.7%) was 38-47 age bracket. Most respondents who went for routine dental checkups were female and had attained tertiary education. Majority 3 (50%) were self-employed, 2 (33.3%) were civil servants and only 1 (16.7%) was a student.

Conclusion and recommendations: Prevalence of routine dental checkup was very low. Low level of education, low socio-economic state, Long distance from health facility, long waiting time/delays, few dental health workers and cost were a hindrance to the routine uptake of dental health services. The Ministry of Health under the Primary Health Care section should encourage dissemination of oral health education to the community through seminars. This can be done at the district level by the dental professionals and would be best if integrated with other ongoing seminars like those for HIV/AIDS Programs. The Ministry of Health should implement a surveillance system to monitor patterns of oral disease and routine uptake of dental health care services, at local or district level so that proper planning is done.