

The need and demand for orthodontic treatment in 13- to 15-year-olds in Nairobi, Kenya.

Abstract:

The need for orthodontic treatment in Kenya was previously not been investigated. This study was undertaken to assess the need for orthodontic treatment in 13- to 15-year-old children in Nairobi. The objective need was assessed in 919 children by using the Norwegian treatment need index, and the subjective need was assessed in 739 children by using a structured questionnaire. Objective treatment need was recorded in 29% and subjective need in 33% of the children. Less than 1% were allocated the 'very great need' category. Relatively more girls than boys were dissatisfied with the appearance of their teeth, and a significantly higher number of girls ($P < 0.001$) said they would like to have their teeth straightened. The children's perceived need for treatment correlated significantly with the treatment need index. Fixed appliances were found necessary for correcting malocclusion in 23% of the children and removable appliances in 6%. Future studies in Kenya should be directed at determining the societal perception of malocclusion, upon which treatment standards may be based