

# Socio-demographic characteristics and clinical features among patients attending a private paediatric dental clinic in Nairobi , Kenya

Masiga Mary A.

Date: 2004

## Abstract:

**OBJECTIVES:** To evaluate the socio-demographic characteristics, chief complaints and clinical presentation of children attending a private dental clinic in Nairobi, Kenya. **DESIGN:** A retrospective survey of dental clinic records. **SETTING:** A private dental clinic in Nairobi, Kenya. **SUBJECTS:** All patients aged 0-18 years who were first-time attenders at the dental clinic during a three year period. **RESULTS:** The records of 800 patients were examined, comprising 395 males and 405 female children. The average age was 7.2 years (95% CI, 6.9-7.4). Referral to the clinic for treatment was mostly by self (81.4%). Most patients (57.9%) were self-sponsored for their dental treatment. Majority of the patients attending (86.8%) did not clinically have any underlying medical conditions. The major complaints for most patients were dental decay (27.4%) and dental pain (21.6%). Very few children (7.6%) attended for dental check-up. Five hundred and forty nine (68.6%) of the children suffered from dental decay while 294 (36.8%) suffered from gingivitis. The average number of teeth decayed was 4.02, SD +/- 2.4 (95% CI 3.8-4.2). Most carious lesions occurred in the younger children. There was a significant increase in the occurrence of decay over the three year period of the study. Significantly higher levels of gingivitis was observed in the prepubertal and pubertal age group. Attendance for traumatic injuries was relatively low with only 46 (5.8%) children reporting traumatic injuries to their dentitions. Most traumatic injuries involved the anterior teeth as a result of falls. Treatment given at the first visit was mainly restorative (28.6%) followed by dental extractions (25.4%). **CONCLUSION:** The average age of patients attending the clinic was 7.2 years. Interdisciplinary referral was low since most patients were self-referred and self sponsored for treatment. Dental caries was prevalent, necessitating a high demand for restorative treatment. Although gingivitis was less prevalent, it was significant among children in the prepubertal years