KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE DENTAL PROFESSION AMONG THE MEDICAL, NURSING AND PHARMACY STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

ABSTRACT

Background; Knowledge and understanding of all the dental profession within the medical sector is essential to ensure better care for patients as a whole. However, other health workers seem to have little knowledge of what dentistry entails and the role of a dentist in the wholly management of a patient. As a result, they tend to sideline dentists and this may lead to neglect of patients.

Objectives; The aim of this study was to evaluate the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of medical, pharmacy and nursing students at the University of Nairobi towards the dental profession.

Design; A descriptive cross-sectional study.

Setting; The study was done at the University of Nairobi, College of Health sciences

Study population; Students studying medicine, nursing and pharmacy at the University of Nairobi

Materials and Methods; A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the students, who were selected using a stratified random sampling method. Data was coded and analyzed using a full SPSS.

Results: The results showed that the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of medical, nursing and pharmacy students at the University of Nairobi was different. Though the other health specialties seem to have a positive attitude towards the dental profession, there is still little knowledge on the role of a dentist in the wholly management of a patient.

Conclusion: There is still little knowledge of what dentistry entails among other health workers, which needs to be improved in order to ensure proper management of patients.

Recommendations: There is need to introduce dentistry as a compulsory unit in other health sciences, so as to improve knowledge of the profession. This will improve equity and teamwork, hence improve management of patients.