

Knowledge, Attitude and Perception of Noma among Medical and Dental Students in Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

NOMA is frequently reported in Nigeria as the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) recorded 37,646 cases between 2011 and 2017 (Nigeria Center for Disease Control, 2019). Despite the fact that Noma meets the WHO criteria as a neglected tropical disease (NTD), it remains excluded from the WHO's list of NTDs (Ahlgren et al., 2017; Brattström-Stolt et al., 2019) and its knowledge among healthcare personnel is still debateable (Feller et al., 2022).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An online cross-sectional study was conducted among Dental and Medical students in Nigeria. A

questionnaire containing sociodemographic characteristics and Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) information regarding Noma was created and administered to the sample population.

RESULTS

300 respondents completed the study. 63.3% (n=190) respondents had heard about Noma with internet as the main source of knowledge (55.3%, 166). 51.3% (154) had less than satisfactory knowledge about Noma. Respondents also had a satisfactory knowledge of nutrition and good oral hygiene in Noma prevention (79.7%, 239; 83.3% 250 respectively) and psychosocial effects of Noma (76%,

228). 35.1% (105) believed the treatment of Noma patients required a multidisciplinary approach. 51.8% (155) were interested in activities to consolidate their knowledge of Noma. 58.7% (176) perceived Noma was indeed, a NTD.

CONCLUSION

From the study, Medical and Dental students in Nigeria have less than satisfactory knowledge but positive outlook towards Noma and they need motivation. favorable platforms must be created in training, research, aggressive health campaigns that will engage medical and dental students in the response to Noma in Nigeria.

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