

ABSTRACT

Objectives

The aim of this study was to assess perceived oral health problems and their impacts on daily performance in adolescents.

Methods

A descriptive cross sectional study was carried out in government schools in the Kandy education zone, Sri Lanka. Eleven schools were selected using two stage cluster sampling technique. Data were collected by a self administrated questionnaire from 591, 15 year old students who were studying in the grade 10 class. The questionnaire included information related to perceived oral disease conditions, perceived need for care, causes for not obtaining care, as well as oral impacts on daily performance index.

Results

Of the total sample, only 354 (60%) reported that they experienced oral health problems at the time of survey. However only 87.3% of them perceived a need for treatment and “lack of time” was cited as the main cause for not obtaining care. The mean percentage OIDP score was 12.16 (SD=12.37). Of those who had an oral health problem, 79.1% had experienced at least one impact. Around 27% had only one daily activity affected due to oral impacts. The most commonly affected activities were eating (46.2%) and smiling (42.3%). Prevalence of oral impacts was significantly associated with toothache and sensitive teeth. Perceived need for treatment was significantly associated with the prevalence of oral impacts. But perceived oral health status was not significantly associated with prevalence of oral impacts.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Over 60% of the sample reported that they had an oral health problem and those oral health problems had caused adverse impacts on their daily activities. Therefore it is important to provide appropriate treatments considering the perceived oral health problems and their impacts.