



Perceived factors by health care providers that lead to low frequency of detection of psychiatric disorders among children and adolescents attending primary health care facilities

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• Introduction

- Studies by WHO indicates that the global mental health burden among people aged 10-19 is 16%.This study also shows that while most mental disorders start by the age of 14,most remain undetected and untreated (Kessler et al.2007).
- Majority of adults presenting with a psychiatric disorder had an onset before the age of 24 years that was not detected early enough(Afana et al.2002).
- A study done in 2019,showed that the prevalence of psychiatric disorders among adolescents was 49%,while the detection was at 9% (Chege,Mbwayo,Mathai 2019).
- The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of primary health care providers on circumstances that lead to low frequency of detection of psychiatric disorders among children and adolescents.

Methodology

- The study used cross sectional mixed methods and used structured questionnaires the research questions..
- Data was collected through from 40 health care aged 28-59year.who attended to children and adolescents at the outpatient department.
- Perceived factors were assessed were explored through a structured questionnaire with open ended questions.

Acknowledgement

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Study Context

- The study was conducted at Limuru health center which is in Limuru sub-county, Kiambu County, Kenya.
- Limuru health center is a rural health facility located at the town center of Limuru, approximately 30km from Nairobi.
- It caters to the population living in Limuru town and its outskirts. The health center has an Outpatient Department service for adults and children over 5 years, which aged of 5 years and above. Children under five years of age are seen at the Mother-Child Clinic.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed qualitatively. Data was coded into excel sheets and content was analyzed to generate themes, narratives and verbatim.

Results

- The study generated different themes and narratives that arose from the analysis.
- Different factors contributing to low frequency of detection included lack of enough knowledge,lack of skills and tools used in diagnosing,inadequate time spent with the patient due to large number of patients and less staff.
 - most participants reported that the most common mental disorder they could easily diagnose and had encountered was psychosis,while also they preferred referring any adolescents that they suspected had a mental health condition.
 - **Various narratives derived from the themes.**
Diagnosing
“No, I don’t diagnose because I don’t feel like I have adequate knowledge to diagnose and treat mental disorders”.

Results continuation

Knowledge

“I don’t have proper understanding on the needs of that age group”.

Tools

“While I send patients to the lab for their physical symptoms, I don’t know what to do with mental ones because there are no tools to help me in diagnosing”.

Common mental disorders

“The most common mental condition I have encountered is psychosis and stress”.

Discussion And Implication

- While data indicates that there are various factors that could lead to reduced chance of detection of psychiatric disorders among children and adolescents,it is vital that young people are able to receive an early diagnosis and also provided with relevant treatment to enhance living a quality and productive life.
- The findings of this study will help in creation of an implementation strategy that will allow capacity building for the health care providers to be able to offer quality mental health services and also early detection and treatment of childhood and adolescent disorders.

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