Dental health-care service utilisation and its determinants in West Iran: a cross-sectional study

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:
Dental health care is not only an effective strategy for the prevention, early diagnosis and treatment of oral diseases but also contributes to the general health of communities. This study aimed to investigate the situation of dental health-care service utilisation and its determinants in Kermanshah city, western Iran, in 2015.

METHODS AND MATERIALS:
A cross-sectional study on a total of 894 household heads was conducted. The participants were selected using a multistage sampling technique. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data. Multiple logistic regression was performed to assess factors associated with utilisation of dental-care services and a negative binomial regression was carried out to identify the main factor associated with the frequency of visiting a dentist for dental health care. A statistically significant association was considered at a value of $P < 0.05$. All the analyses were performed using STATA version 12.

FINDING:
Of the total household heads who participated in the study, 60.3% and 9.9% reported visiting a dentist for dental treatment in the past year and for monthly dental check-ups, respectively. The average ± standard deviation number of visits by a respondent was 2.08 ± 2.97. Of the total number of respondents, 31.4% (121) reported visiting a dentist once or twice in the last 12 months for dental health-care services, while 38% reported visiting a dentist more than twice in the same time period. Ageing, having dental insurance, higher income, being a university graduate, self-rated poor oral health and not regularly brushing own teeth were the main factors associated with utilisation of dental health-care services.

CONCLUSION:
Our study indicates that dental health-care utilisation among households in the study area was influenced by a number of factors, including being socio-economically disadvantaged, self-rated poor oral health and not regularly brushing own teeth. Therefore, in this setting, dental-intervention programmes, including dental health insurance, should focus on mechanisms that can strengthen utilisation of preventive dental health-care services among disadvantaged households.

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KEYWORDS:
Dental care; Iran; socio-economic determinants; utilisation