The Management of Orofacial Pain in Developing Countries: The Current Challenges

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ABSTRACT

In developed countries, orofacial pain is one condition in dentistry that has been well defined, explored, and managed. Unfortunately, unlike the grown and developed management of orofacial pain in developed countries, the management of orofacial pain in developing countries is still poorly performed. The current article discusses about the current management of orofacial pain in developing countries. At the time being, there are several factors that are considered to be the etiology of the unsuccessful management of orofacial pain in developing countries. Lack of knowledge about the symptoms of orofacial pain is considered to be one of them. Therefore, educating more people about orofacial pain and its symptoms should be included in the comprehensive plan of orofacial pain management plan in developing countries.

As the problem of orofacial pain in developing countries is happening at the root level, the education should not only cover those who are responsible in treating orofacial pain but also the one who might experience orofacial pain. It is expected that the current article will provide a current insight about the management of orofacial pain in developing countries as well as the current barriers of orofacial pain management. And furthermore, initiates more studies in the field of orofacial pain in developing countries.

KEY WORDS: Temporomandibular disorder (TMD); Orofacial pain; Etiology.

INTRODUCTION

Despite of the development of treatment modalities in the field of orofacial pain in developed countries that resulted in decreased morbidity of orofacial pain, developing countries are still faced with the high incidence of orofacial pain problems. The correct formula in managing orofacial pain in developing countries is still not properly composed. At least not the one in Asia. The latest epidemiological survey about the prevalence of orofacial pain on 1,551 participants in Indonesia in one of its largest provinces revealed that nearly half the surveyed participants (49.9%) had or have been having orofacial pain in the last 6 months.1

A study conducted by Sipila et al.1 that studied about the prevalence of orofacial pain and Temporomandibular Disorder (TMD) on 1,501 Finnish and Thai people revealed that Thai people had an increased risk of reporting orofacial pain, tooth pain, and pain in the face. Whilst a pilot study in Malaysia conducted on 16 years old students in Kelantan showed that 44% indicated that they had or have been having orofacial pain within the last four weeks. Out of the 44%, 27% stated that they were still experiencing the pain at the time of interview, yet, only 8% out of the 27% sought for professional help.1