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Determinants of periodontal disease in pregnancy and association with preterm births and low birth weights in an urban setting in Zimbabwe

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Periodontal disease is one of the common infectious diseases in pregnancy. The disease is caused by bacteria that produce inflammation of gingiva through production of inflammatory mediators that may have direct insult on amnion. Untreated and chronic dental infections have a possibility of causing harm to mother and baby. An analytical cross sectional study whose purpose was to determine the prevalence and risk factors for periodontal disease in pregnancy was done. A random sample of 350 pregnant women was selected at Harare city Primary Care clinics. Approval was granted by the Joint Research Ethics Committee of the University of Zimbabwe College of Health Sciences and Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals, the Medical Research Council of Zimbabwe, Harare City Directorate and participants gave informed consent. Code numbers were used to identify participants. Data was collected through face to face interviews following a structured questionnaire, clinical intraoral examination and from clinical records. Data was captured using research electronic data capturing (RedCap) and was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Mean maternal age was 25.9 years SD 5.7 prevalence of periodontal disease was 48.7%. No significant factors were associated with periodontal disease in the current study. However other studies have reported significant risk factors for periodontal disease such as gestation age of the pregnancy and place of residence. Periodontal health is relatively neglected area in perinatal care. Health care professionals should be trained in screening for periodontal disease and giving health education in order to reduce adverse perinatal outcomes.

Biography

Clara Haruzivishe is a professor of Nursing at the University of Zimbabwe. She has received her Doctorate from Case Western Reserve University. Her research area is Maternal and Child health and Nursing Education. She also serves as a supervisor and coordinator of PhD programme. She also coordinates a NORHED grant awarded to the College of Health Sciences at the University of Zimbabwe.

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