

Prevalence of Childhood Cancer among Children attending Referral Hospitals of Outpatient Department in Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Childhood cancer is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the pediatrics age group. The problem affects both developed and developing countries. A high mortality rate has been observed in low-income countries. Despite its high fatality rate, less attention has been paid to the problem in developing countries, including Ethiopia. For this reason, childhood cancer is not well documented in the study setting. Therefore, we assessed the prevalence of childhood cancer in Ethiopia.

Methods: Institution based cross-sectional study design from January 1, 2019, to March 30, 2019, was conducted in the pediatrics treatment center. A systematic random sampling technique has used to select 1270 children in the pediatric outpatient department. The data were entered using Epi info version 7 and exported to SPSS version 20 for analysis. We checked model fitness for the advanced statistical methods, but it was difficult to proceed with logistic regression model to see the association between dependent and explanatory variables because of the unmet x2 assumption. We presented the results by using tables and figures.

Results: From the total 1270 study participants, 1257 were included in the final analysis provided that a 98.97% response rate. Out of these, 10(0.8%) children were diagnosed with cancer. Regarding its types, two each, Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia, Wilms tumor, Hodgkin lymphoma, and one each non-Hodgkin lymphoma, Parotid cancer, Retinoblastoma, and Breast cancer were reported. The prevalence of childhood cancer was 0.9% and 0.7% among male and female children, respectively.

Conclusions: Eight children diagnosed with cancer per 1,000 children who visited the pediatric outpatient department. Even though childhood cancers have little attention from policymakers, the prevalence of childhood cancer remains prevalent. Therefore, researchers and policymakers shall give special emphasis to childhood cancer.

Keywords: Cancer, Children, Ethiopia

BIOGRAPHY

Chalachew Adugna Wubneh is assistance professor of Pediatrics and Child Health Nursing. He received his MSC in Pediatrics and Child Health Nursing from the University of Gondar, Ethiopia in 2018; his BSc in Nursing from University of Gondar, Ethiopia in 2015 and his Diploma in clinical nursing from Teda health science college in 2010, Ethiopia. He joined the University of Gondar as technical assistance, in July 2015. Since then, he passed through different academic rank, taught different professional nursing courses to health science students. Currently he is teaching child health nursing course and neonatal nursing course for different nursing students and midwifery.

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