

3rd Euro Congress and Expo on

Dental & Oral Health

June 16-18, 2015 Alicante, Spain

A situational analysis of the viability of delivering oral health promotional activities within the health promoting school initiative in kwazulu- natal

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The aim of the study was to understand the contextualised delivery of oral health service provision within Health Promoting Schools. The objective of the study was to conduct a situational analysis of the existing services provided at these schools and to review current health and education policies.

Methods: The study design was explorative using a mixed methods approach. Twenty three Health Promoting Schools of a total sample of 154 were selected by random sampling from the eleven districts of KwaZulu-Natal. Data collection comprised of policy reviews, a self-administered questionnaire, data capture sheet and interview schedule. The study was approved by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (HSS/0509/013D).

Results: The results of the study indicated that although policies included statements on oral health promotion, this was not translated into practice at school level. Barriers and challenges identified in this study for the successful implementation of an oral health promotion programme included lack of funds, human resources, knowledge and ownership; high workloads and time constraints

Conclusions: Policy formulation and strategic planning must include educators and health care workers at grass root level for the successful implementation and sustainability of oral health promotion programmes. More research needs to be conducted to address the opportunities and challenges facing educators and other oral health care providers working in the school environment.

Biography

Mogie reddy graduated as a Dental Therapist from the University of Durban-Westville in 1995. He works for the Department of Health in KwaZulu-Natal at the Oral and Dental Training Hospital for 25 years. During this period he assisted in the training of Dental Therapists and Oral Hygienists. He completed my Honours in Dental Therapy at Medunsa in 1989 and my Masters in Dental Public Health at the University of Western Cape in 2009. He was appointed as lecturer in the Discipline of Dentistry at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2010. He is currently completing his PhD in Health Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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