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Research Article

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[Burden of hearing loss in Sub-Saharan Africa: Snapshot from an ENT clinic in Nigeria](#)

Background: Disabling hearing loss is a prevalent public health issue, with significant impact on patients' communication. The disability associated with hearing loss depends on the severity of the hearing loss. There are limited rehabilitative measures in resource challenged environment. This study assesses the incidence, the factors for hearing impairment and the management outcome.

Methods: A descriptive three-year chart review of patients managed for hearing loss in a tertiary health center in a developing country. The data collected include demographic data, clinical presentation and risk factors for hearing loss, audiometric reports, rehabilitative measures and management outcome.

Results: The patients with ear symptoms managed within the study period were 1350, of whom 498 (36.8%) had hearing loss of varying degrees. These included 145 (29.1%) males and 353 (70.9%) females with male to female ratio of 1:2.4. The age ranged from 8 to 80 years (median age of 35.7). Disabling hearing loss in the better-hearing ear occurred in 216 (43.4%) of cases. Increasing age and chronic supportive otitis media were associated with disabling hearing loss. The hearing thresholds improved with hearing aids and ear surgical procedures; nonetheless the patients' rehabilitation was impaired by limited resources.

Conclusion: There is poor rehabilitation of people with hearing loss, though management outcome is commendable in a few of them. Health education will reduce the risk factors for disabling hearing loss and improved rehabilitative measures are needed for these individuals.
