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Lower middle income class preferences for dental services

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ABSTRACT
Background: Lower middle income class is the major population in Indonesia who largely utilizing dental care facilities. Dental service should pursue the changes of need, demand, desire and expectation of middle class in Indonesia. Purpose: Therefore, the aim of this paper is to determine the pattern of preferences for dental care of lower middle class including type, reason of choosing a dental service, factors of selection, recommendation, dental condition, loyalty, expectation, waiting time and facilities. Methods: A number of 487 respondents (164 male and 323 female) was obtained from lower middle income patients at Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta Dental Hospital aged 15-65 years. A questionnaire consisting of 10 questions about the factors that influence the preferences of dental health care facilities were implied. Results: The result of this study shows that type of dental service they would visits are dental hospital. A good service became the reason of choosing a dental service, and factors affected of selection dental service is recommendation. Recommendation from friends is the most influent for this group. However, they only came to visit dentist only if they have existing pain in their teeth. Lower middle income loyalty will appear if the dentist have a good skill and communication. They have expectation serve painless while at dental service, and they are willing for waiting time at dental services is 15-30 minutes. Magazine is the items should be provide for facilities in dental services. Conclusion: It can be conclude from this study that lower middle income class prefer to dental hospital, but they will visit it only if existing pain with their teeth.

Key words: Dental preference, lower middle income class

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia continues to post significant economic growth. As of March 2013, the country’s economy baseline outlook for growth is expected to be 6.2 percent in 2013 and increase to 6.5 percent in 2014. The country’s gross national income per capita has steadily risen from $2,200 in the year 2000 to $3,563 in 2012. Out of a population of 234 million, more than 100 million Indonesians currently at middle income groups would changes the Indonesian economic. The demographic shifts described necessitate special attention by medical and dental professionals. The dental health care community needs to evaluate its readiness to handle the particular needs of the growing lower middle income group population.

Social inequality in access to oral health care is a feature of countries with predominantly privately funded markets for dental services. In the future, access to dental care may worsen as trends in demography, disease and development come to bear on national oral healthcare systems. In the new global economy, Indonesian dentist need to examine the social change and suggest a contemporary approach for dentist service planning so that the future oral and dental needs and demands of Indonesian population may be met in an equitable manner. The lower middle income class is the major population in Indonesia who largely utilizing dental care facilities.

Socio-economic variations in health exist for a wide range of health outcomes. Social mobility,
the movement of an individual between socio-economic groups during his/her life, and the factors associated with such mobility have been suggested to play a role in creating variation. Dental practice is certainly not immune to social economic and behaviour change. So how do these changes factors influence dentist? As a professional group, general landscape for dental practice needs to be negotiated with society, as well as government and patients. First, the effects of globalisation are evident in a more diverse patient base and service facilities.

Dental service should be pursue the changes of need, demand, desire and expectation of middle class in Indonesia. It should be describe the characteristic seek in dental services, facilities at dental services, respon while waiting at dental services, reason to visit dentist, reason to choose dentist, and who is the most influent to give recommendation go to the dentist. The aim of this paper is to determine to know the preferences of the population with lower middle income group while looking for dental care.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The method of this research is observational study which have the sample population for the study was obtained from lower middle income patients at Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta Dental Hospital. Average income of respondents to be the decisive variable for determining the lower middle class, which is in accordance to the minimum wage set in Yogyakarta Province. Samples were filtered by age groups according to target health development population 2011 – 2014 from Indonesia Health ministry. Health ministry target group for productive age is 15-65 years.

This study obtained questionnaires from 487 respondents of this study, consisted of 164 male respondents and 323 female respondents. Respondents were asked to fill in the answers of the following 10 questions about some of the factors that influence the selection of dental health care facilities.

Questionnaire are divided into 10 statements, that need validity and reliability test for 30 respondents at “Dana Sehat Muhammadiyah” clinic Yogyakarta, which is a part of Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta dental hospital. The validity results with Pearson’s product moment correlation showed that the questionnaire had 10 statements coefficient greater than 0.3, it can be concluded that the entire statement is valid questionnaires and can be used. Then, for reliability test, it used Cronbach alpha coefficient, and the result for the 10 questionnaire statements with is greater than 0.60 with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.853. It can be concluded that of the 10 statements are all reliabel.

RESULT

Lower middle class income population have an specific preference while they were asked need, demand, desire, and expectation about seek for dental services. Although it percentage didn’t have differ significantly, but there are appears differentiation about male or female desire to choose which dental service they would visited. The male major group seems choose to go to primary health care (31,71%), and female major group choose dental hospital (35,60%). It shown at Figure 1, that two dental care services was the highest choosen by these group. However, it can be seen that lower middle income group always seek specific dental care facilities rather than general health care facilities.

The expectation from lower middle class about the reason why they choose dental services is scattered almost evenly. They would prefer to go to the dental health services which have a good service or affordable price,which is male 32,32% and female 34,37% (Figure 2). However, both male and female group still indicates that affordable price need to be considered based on ability to pay.

Recommendation is the most affected for lower middle class when they have decided to choose where they will go to visit the dentist which is have percentage for male 60,98% and female 64,40% (Figure 3). Others factor seems did not give any significant effect. A dentist probably should think again before use advertising for their dental service, it is because advertising need a large budget but not give significant impact.

![Figure 1. Type of dental service preference for lower middle income class.](image-url)
Describe about recommendation which had effect for the selection of dental services, respondent asked for who is the most influential to give recommendation. Both in group male and female shown that friends and family is the most influential to tease lower income class opinion for selecting the dentist. Friends and family considered to give trusted information for them about the dental services. The result for this statement are 42.07% (male) and 42.34% (female) said that friend have power to recommended a dental services. Not differ much, family recommendation result is for male 41.46% and female 42.11% (Figure 4).

Over half of those surveyed reported that they will go to visit their dentist only if they have existing pain in their teeth (65.85% male and 62.54% female from lower middle class). This shown that they have low priority about their dental health condition. As we know, lower middle class have less awareness or demand because they should fulfill the basic needs first (Figure 5).

Factor that influence loyalty of lower middle class to the dental services has shown at Figure 6. The reason why 50% male and 47.99% female always repeated go to the same dental service is because of the dentist skill. However, even it’s not high level percentages, they still need to know how good the dentist will give information and price.

The result of expectation lower middle class if they would go to the dental services is painless treatment from the dentist, with percentage for...
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Male are 42,07%, and female 48,30% (Figure 7). Others expect their expectation is affordable price for the dental treatment (male 36,59%; female 32,82%). At Figure 8, we will seen the expectation of affordable waiting time at dental care services. They have suggested the appropriate waiting time at dental services is around 15–30 minutes.

At every dental service we will find magazine, it serves to pass the time while waiting for patients in dental care facilities. About this magazine, 34,76% male and 31,37% female reported that this item are expected to provide at dental health care facilities. Interestingly, it have been noticed from this group, that there is other expectation items which appear from global technology changes. The respondens it seem need wifi connection during the waiting time at the dental care services. This facilities was responded by male group 23,78% and female group 24,22% being the expected item to support gadget device. As we know, in this global technology change, everyone need to connect each other, each time they get to be wait for any activity (Figure 9).

DISCUSSION

Rising middle class in Indonesia is provide opportunities for the nation’s economic progress. This could give specific perspective about the preferences dental care services of lower middle income class. As we know, lower middle income class is the larger group in Indonesia population who largely utilizing dental care facilities. Dentist need to consider something more preferably from lower middle income group to set up his practice. Especially, for Indonesia which would implement universal social health insurance will start on 2014 and the largest group is lower middle income class.

From the result of this study, show that lower middle income had not so encouraging about dental health awareness. They will go to visit dentist late and need a complex treatment, this mean requires more expensive cost in dental treatment. We have assumed that this group didn’t realize with this condition, and will be more difficult for the dentist to give an ideal treatment with limited cost. Dentist should prefers right cost right treatment for this matter, and set an appropriate diagnosed-treatment group for lower middle income class. At the other side, we should give dental health education to change their habit to visit dentist to patient from lower middle income class. It should be prevention program to intervene and change the culture about their mindset visit the dentist if only they have teeth pain. This program should be provided at major selection for dental services from lower middle income class, which is dental hospital and primary
health care services. However, its also needs to give family dental budget plan when the dentist give dental health education. Lower middle income class would have exposed dental costly if they have late to go to visit their dentist.

Dental care services need to considered the equality of dental treatment, building and amenities. It should be tangible from patient perspective, and it should be not complicated to understand. Facilities, building and waiting time service must be relevant with the final price, its mean patient should get more value compare with the patient give to the dentist (treatment cost).7 There fore, the dental care facilities for lower middle income class could considered the preferences about affordable price and supporting facilities. For example, in this study showed that lower middle income class would prefer magazine while the were waiting at dental practice. This could be a reason to cut dental service budget for televesion, free drink or others, so the investation for dental practiced will be more efficient. Interestingly, its also showed in this study, that global technology changes has effect this lower middle income class. This group seems have new habitual social demand to connect each other and each time with social media. They prefer wifi connection after magazine that should be provided at dental care facilities. This can be assumed that even lower middle income class have already affected by social changes. Now, the world is already flat and its globalized.8

Recommendation is the most powerfull influences to choose dental care services. In fact, recommendation from friends and family have influent lower middle income class when they seek for dental care services. Friends is trusted information for this group to give their opinion, and family had endorse to go to visit the dental care by their experience. It can be noticed that woman always concern about the healthiness of their family, thats why it has been shown that woman have play the roles for choosing the dental care services.9 It can be noticed that advertising and signing isn’t have relevant impact. Word of mouth in new era of globalization is more effective and efficient. Dental service could use social media in ethical conduct for low budget high impact program in marketing.10

It can be conclude from this study that lower middle income class prefer to dental hospital, but they will visit it only if existing pain with their teeth. This group will visit dental health service if there are any recommendation from friends and family. Lower middle income loyalty will appear if the dentist have a good skill and communication. They have expectation serve painless while at dental service, and they are willing for waiting time at dental services is 15-30 minutes. Magazine is the items should be provide for facilities in dental services.

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