

Thesis Title : DENTAL NEEDS, DEMANDS, AND UTILIZATION
OF DENTAL SERVICES: A CASE STUDY OF
BANGKOK METROPOLITAN ADMINISTRATION'S
HEALTH CENTER NUMBER 30

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ABSTRACT

A study on the dental needs, demands, and pattern of utilization of dental services was conducted with patients presenting themselves for treatment at Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's Health Center No. 30, more popularly known as Wat Chao-arm Health Center No. 30 in Bangkoknoi, Bangkok. The specific objectives of the study were to determine the dental treatment needs of a segment of Bangkok's low socioeconomic population group, to identify the factors which influenced the demands they made for dental services, and to elaborate on the pattern of utilization of dental services as influenced by socioeconomic factors. An understanding of these components would provide baseline information for the planning of more effective and efficient dental care delivery systems.

A structured questionnaire, used to inquire into the factors that affected the demands that were generated for health services and the consumption pattern that followed the demands, and an oral examination record, used to assess the patients' treatment needs were the research tools employed in the study.

The findings reveal that among the sociodemographic factors studied, that of education had

the most significant and consistent influence on the utilization of services. It was also shown that the high incidence of dental caries and periodontal disease among the subjects created a strong demand for extraction services. Toothache and the perception of need or the recognition of symptoms were the most common reasons for patients to seek out dental care.

A general lack of dental health consciousness was observed among the subjects resulting in poor oral health conditions. It has been recommended, therefore, that massive dental health education campaigns be launched to motivate the population to better oral health.