Introduction:
- Scabies mites (*Sarcoptes scabiei* var. *hominis*) burrow into skin and deposit eggs, causing intense pruritis. In resource-poor tropical settings, the sheer burden of scabies infestation, as well as their complications, imposes a major cost on health-care systems.
- There is no prior research on the burden that scabies poses on the community of Shirati, Tanzania.
- **Aim**: to identify the prevalence of disease and potential gaps in the care management of dermatologic infectious conditions while gathering epidemiological data that could help identify targets for interventions in Shirati.

Methods:
- **Study type**: Cross Sectional Observational Pilot Study
- **Study Population**: Patient population at Shirati KMT hospital as well as volunteers from the general community of Shirati village at the weekly market.
- **Data collection**: Survey (see next section) translated in Swahili and observational notes from shadowing clinician encounters.

Skin Disease Survey:
**General:**
1. Age: __________________________
2. Sex: __________________________
3. Occupation: ____________________
4. Religion: ______________________
5. Education: _____________________
6. Village: _______________________

**Skin:**
1. Have you been diagnosed with a skin disease? Please Circle: yes no
2. Do you currently have the skin condition (rash, bumps, redness, etc)? Please Circle: yes no
   a. If yes, what? _______________________
3. Do you think the skin condition is an issue? Please Circle: yes no
4. Have you used medication for your condition? Please Circle: yes no
   If yes, please state whether it was prescribed, a home remedy, or other ______________________
5. Do you prefer traditional/local remedies or modern healthcare? Please Circle: traditional modern
6. What are some barriers to receiving health care for a skin condition? (ex: location, cost, etc)

Results:
- There were 17 cases of infectious and 5 cases of noninfectious dermatological conditions (n=17).
- Prevalence of scabies was 41.2% (n=7), with the majority presenting between ages of 18-30 years old.
  - There was no statistical significance between genders or age groups.
  - “Unclean,” and “dirty” are words subjects reported being reactions to their condition.
- Out of the 10 patients that responded to the question, all preferred modern (hospital) care over local remedies.
- 60% participants reported they received medication to treat their skin condition.
  - 57.1% of participants with scabies reported receiving medication for treatment.
- Observed Limitations: patients were not educated on their condition, did not follow up, and could not recall prescribed medication.
- Of the subjects seen, more than half received medication but were still experiencing the symptoms of the disease.
- Three of the participants who presented with scabies reported sharing clothes with each other, having no prior knowledge of how the disease spreads.
- Suggests a gap in care management
- Noted a voiced stigma towards the patients presenting with scabies, potentially hindering patients from seeking medical care.

Conclusion:
- This pilot study suggests that scabies poses a burden of disease in Shirati.
- Future studies should focus on improving patient education on the prevention and care of scabies during the clinical visit and community outreach to combat the stigma of contracting scabies.

References

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