Health-seeking behavior of Port Harcourt City Residents: A Univariate Comparison between the Upper and Lower Socio-Economic Classes

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BACKGROUND
This study aimed at establishing the determinants and distribution of the health-seeking behaviours of Port Harcourt City residents, with comparison between the upper and lower socio-economic classes.

METHOD
This was a descriptive cross-sectional study that used 204 respondents. The socio-economic classification was done using occupation and average monthly income. A Multi-staged sampling technique was used in subject selection; stage one being by stratified sampling using socio-economic classes for stratification while stage two involved clustered sampling; following which five-sectioned structured questionnaires were administered.

RESULTS
Differences (P<0.05) in Health facility used existed as the upper class used mostly Hospitals (Government and Private); the lower class additionally used health centres and un-orthodox health facilities. Reasons for using a health facility was similar (P>0.05) as both classes mostly go for treatment or medical check-ups. Health facility preference was mostly for good treatment outcome and accessibility; cost was also a cardinal reason for the lower class. Commonly and last used health-care giver differed (P<0.05); the upper class mostly saw a doctor, the lower saw the doctor, pharmacist and nurse. Competence was the major reason for health-care giver selection by the upper class, it differed (P<0.05) from the lower class that had previous good treatment outcome and illness severity.

CONCLUSION
The upper socio-economic class has better health-seeking behavior as they use more competent Health facilities and health-care givers.

KEYWORDS
Health-seeking behaviours; Determinants; Social Class Comparison; Port Harcourt; Nigeria.

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