ABSTRACT:
TITLE: Urinary Incontinence Among Women Seeking Gynaecologic Care At A Tertiary Centre In Ghana: A Study Of Prevalence, Associated Factors And Impact On Quality Of Life.

Study Background: Non-fistulous urinary incontinence has a profound negative impact on the quality of life of affected women. In sub-Saharan Africa including Ghana the concern has been on urinary incontinence from obstetric fistula and very little research has been done on the subject of non-fistulous incontinence. Consequently there is conflicting information with respect to prevalence rate in the sub-region.

Objectives of the Study: The study aimed to determine the prevalence and determinants of non-fistulous urinary incontinence among women attending the out-patient gynaecology clinic of a tertiary hospital in Ghana and to assess its impact on the quality of life of affected women.

Methods: An analytical cross-sectional study was done between January and March 2015. Four hundred (400) women were studied within the period using an interviewer administered questionnaire. Urinary incontinence was assessed using a modified version of the International Consultation on Incontinence Questionnaire-short form (ICIQ-SF). The data was analysed using stata version 13.

Results: The prevalence of non-fistulous urinary incontinence was 12% with stress, urge and mixed incontinence as the most common type of urethral urinary incontinence. Logistic regression analysis indicated that compared to women 18-39, women aged 60 years and more (OR 3.66 95%CI 1.48-9.00 P=0.005), and women with a history of chronic cough (OR 3.80 95% CI 1.36-10.58 P=0.01) were more likely to experience urinary incontinence. However women with education beyond the basic level were less likely to experience urinary incontinence compared with those with education level up to the basic level(OR 0.28 95%CI 0.08-0.96 P=0.04).

Urinary incontinence has a negative impact on the quality of life of most women and this negative impact was mostly confined to mild and moderate levels.

Conclusion: Non-fistulous urinary incontinence is common among women in Ghana, affecting over 12% of these Gynaecologic patients. Improving formal education levels will help in reducing the prevalence of non-fistulous urinary incontinence and its negative impact on the quality of life of our women. In addition there is the need to educate the population to report symptoms of urinary incontinence when it occurs and not to accept as normal with advancing age.

Key words: urinary incontinence, stress urinary incontinence, urge urinary incontinence, mixed urinary incontinence, obstetric fistula