

Socio-demographic and Hearing Aid Related Factors that Influence Use of Hearing Aids

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Introduction; Hearing loss (HL) is increasingly recognized as a public health problem. Even though hearing aids (HA) are the primary rehabilitation option, majority of adults with HL who obtain HAs do not use them.

Objectives; The study aimed to identify the factors that distinguish between HA users and non-users, describe the reasons reported by the participants related to their dissatisfaction with the HAs and assess the perceived usefulness of HAs in successful HA owners using International Outcome Inventory-Hearing Aids (IOI-HA).

Methods; It was an analytical cross sectional study. Total of 115 HA owners in the age range from 18 to 80 years were recruited by purposive sampling from three private HA dispensing clinics and two government hospitals. Sinhala version of IOI-HA and questionnaire on demographic and audiological details were given to participants after obtaining their consent. Information on audiological findings and HAs were obtained from the relevant service providers.

Results; A significant association was found between continuous use of HAs and HA provider, family encouragement, ability to manipulate the HA, perceived handicap, and previous HA usage.

Poor quality of sound, disturbance in noisy situations, other side effects, ability to hear without the HA were the most commonly reported reasons for dissatisfaction by the HA users. And poor sound quality, ability to hear without the device, broken device and not getting the ear mould made were the reasons for giving up the HA by non-users.

48% of participants used HA more than 8 hours a day and 70% were satisfied with their HA.

Conclusion; Obtaining the HA from private clinic, presence of family encouragement, ability to manipulate HA, previous HA usage and feeling handicapped without HA were the factors associated with regular use of HA. Poor quality of sound was the most common problem of the HA. The scores of IOI-HA indicated that higher number of HA users were having better outcomes by using HAs.

Keywords: Hearing loss, hearing aids, International Outcome Inventory-Hearing Aids (IOI-HA)

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