**PREDISPOSING FACTORS TO CHILDHOOD EPILEPSY AT THE FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE, UMUAHIA NIGERIA**

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Epilepsy is one of the major public health issues in Sub-saharan Africa.

OBJECTIVES

To describe the predisposing factors associated with childhood epilepsy at the Federal Medical Centre, Umuahia and to identify the preventable ones.

METHOD

The data of epileptic patients who registered at the Paediatric Neurology clinic were obtained from January 2019 to December 2021.

RESULTS

One hundred and sixty seven patients with epilepsy were enrolled over the period. Sixty one (36.5%) of the patients had no identified predisposing factors to their seizures, 15 (9%) had positive family history of seizures, one (0.6%) had a cerebral malformation (left frontal cyst), and one (0.6%) had seizures triggered by watching TV. One (0.6%) patient had a co-morbidity of HIV dementia/encephalopathy, two (1.2%) had Down syndrome, two (1.2%) had neurocutaneous disorders and one (0.6%) had Sickle Cell Anaemia. The preventable predisposing factors identified were; perinatal asphyxia in forty one (28%), 15 out 16 (11%) patients who had neonatal seizure also had perinatal asphyxia. Twelve of the patients (7.2%) had bilirubin encephalopathy, 17 (10.2%) were associated with traumatic brain injury, 32 (19.2%) were associated with Meningitis/ Encephalitis and four (2.4%) were cases of substance abuse.

CONCLUSION

Many predisposing factors associated with Epilepsy in Umuahia were preventable. Hence, more emphasis should be made on creating awareness against the preventable predisposing factors to epileptic seizures in order to reduce the incidence of Epilepsy and its unpalatable stigma in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Childhood, Epilepsy, Predisposing, factors, Umuahia