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**Responses of TDA "member" to communications from the Management Committee
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To become a member of Tanzania Dental Association (TDA) one must fulfill the conditions for membership as stipulated in article 4 A (a) - (d) of the Constitution. These include basically: (i) to apply in writing to the Management Committee (MC), (ii) to get approval of the application from the MC, (iii) to complete a membership form and pay entry fee and subscription fee. Such records could not be ascertained for "members" when we took office in March 1996. The MC therefore embarked on an exercise to establish membership status for all "members". The aims were: (i) to collect as much relevant baseline data from "members" and eligible members of TDA (ii) to create a database for membership status, (iii) to distribute the Constitution to "members" and eligible members of TDA and solicit their views and (iv) to collect sample size photos for identity cards processing. This paper reports on some of the striking findings of the exercise. The MC designed and approved the form. Known addresses were used for mailing. Information sought included: demographic data, education and employment. Association activity, ideas on roles and duties of TDA and members, the Constitution and photos. In November 1996, a total of 202 forms were mailed locally and abroad to "members" and eligible. Overall response rate was very low 21.7%, only 44 were filled and returned to the secretary from 15 regions to date, It was higher among Daux (66.7%), ADOs (34.4%), MC members 3 of 10 (30.0%), and dentists (27.5%) but very low among therapists (13.0%) and technicians (4.7%). Photos were obtained from 22 (50%) of the respondents. Sixty (78.9% of 10) attendants of the 141h SC & AGM did not fill the forms. Expectations: while 15 (43.0%) said they did not expect TDA to do anything for them 9 (20.4%) expected continuing education, 7 (15.9% of 10) safeguard and defend the profession and 6 (13.6%) expected assistance to further studies. Eighteen (40.9% of 10) had nothing to do for TDA, 6 (13.6%) were ready to do anything and 4 (9.0%) to do research and pay subscriptions. It is concluded that TDA has got very few interested and committed members. Only those should form the backbone of the Association.