ABSTRACT

Diabetes is a major health challenge in the world, but it can be effectively managed or controlled through diabetes information and education. However, none has dwelt on the language dynamics of communication interactions despite the fact that Nigeria is a multi-lingual nation. Therefore, the study investigates the language challenges faced by persons living with diabetes (PLWDs) and diabetes educators (DEs) in the course of diabetes education in the urban and semi-urban centres of Nigeria. Qualitative methods used to gather information from 120 diabetes patients selected from three health facilities in Ogun and Lagos states. The findings reveal that most diabetes educators use the English language to educate their patients. Reason being that of ease, unavailability of most diabetes education materials in the local languages and a heterogeneous audience made up of different ethnic groups. It is recommended that diabetes educators use locally prepared pamphlets and materials for inclusiveness and good understanding of their patients.
INTRODUCTION

The role of language in communication and hence development cannot be over emphasized. Development information given through appropriate channels using a generally acceptable and inclusive language produces the required result among the target audience. Health as a very important determinant for development is one sector where information exchange or communication between health personnel and patients should be unambiguous so as not to give room for misinformation and misconceptions which could lead to dangerous health outcomes. Language can cause divisions as well as bring unity among a people as exemplified in the Biblical story of the tower of Babel. A health message delivered in the language of the audience is more likely to be easily understood and accepted than the one in another (foreign) language. The ability of language to alienate and also disenfranchise non speakers makes it a powerful tool that should not be neglected in any development discourse, especially health care. For a development venture to be effective, all parties should be carried along from the planning stage to the implementation and evaluation stages. This participatory approach promotes just, peaceful and inclusive societies as Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 16) advocates.

BACKGROUND

Diabetes is a debilitating health condition which affects over/about 382 million cases in the world, (IDF Atlas, 2013). It occurs as a result of the inability of the body to produce enough insulin or absorb and use the already produced one. Its etiology is not fully known and is said to have no cure but can be effectively controlled or managed without leading to its many co-morbidities or even death.

According to IDF Atlas (2013), Nigeria has diabetes prevalence of 5.0% and is estimated to rise to 5.7% by 2030 because of the high rate of industrialisation and modernisation which has affected people’s lifestyle negatively. The figure makes Nigeria the highest in Africa alongside Senegal and Cote d’Ivoire sharing the same figure. Efforts have been made by researchers in the health-related fields such as medicine, nursing, biochemistry and pharmacognosy at investigating the causes, signs and symptoms and the treatment and/or management options for diabetes. However, these efforts are not sufficient for the fight against diabetes without taking other social, cultural, economic and religious factors that may affect one’s health into consideration. According to Parrot (2004), health determinants are not only medical or clinical as there are many other factors or variables that affect health outcome. Therefore, the application and integration of communication activities in the health
Related Content

Parameters Estimation of Aircraft and RPAS Satellite Channels Based on IEEE 802.11a Standard
www.igi-global.com/chapter/parameters-estimation-of-aircraft-and-rpas-satellite-channels-based-on-ieee-80211a-standard/223304?camid=4v1a

The Role of Mass Media in Women’s Participation in 2013 Kenya General Election
Thomas Ibrahim Okinda (2020). Media Controversy: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice (pp. 528-548).
www.igi-global.com/chapter/the-role-of-mass-media-in-womens-participation-in-2013-kenya-general-election/235642?camid=4v1a
Indigenous Australian Detective Fiction as Political Writing
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/indigenous-australian-detective-fiction-as-political-writing/232148?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/indigenous-australian-detective-fiction-as-political-writing/232148?camid=4v1a)

La Terra dei Fuochi: Cultural Labeling, Ecological Crimes, and Social (re)Action in Mediocratic Italy
[www.igi-global.com/article/la-terra-dei-fuochi/202473?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/la-terra-dei-fuochi/202473?camid=4v1a)