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INFLUENCE OF HEALTH TALK ON YOUTHS' WELL BEING
IN BARUTEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KWARA STATE
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Abstract

The study examined the influence of health talk on youths' wellbeing in Baruten local government area of Kwara State. Health talk is the process of educating individual and groups on issues of improving their general wellbeing and preventing all forms of diseases. The variables examined includes, Health talk in relation to reduction of: (i) Unhealthy habits; (ii) Early marriages / teenage pregnancies and (iii) Substance abuse among youth in Baruten Local Government Area, of Kwara State. This study adopted a descriptive research design of the survey type. The population of the study comprised all youths from which 268 were sampled from youth groups participating in health talk across the 11 electoral Wards in Baruten Local Government Area. The instrument used was researchers' designed questionnaire, validated by three experts in the field of health education, from the Department of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education, University of Ilorin. Split-half method was used to test the reliability of the instrument, using spearman's ranking order to get the reliability co-efficient of 0.74r. Inferential statistics of Chi-square was used to analyze the data collected for this study. All the hypotheses formulated for the study were tested at 0.05alpha level of significance. The results revealed that health talk had significantly influenced the reduction of unhealthy habits, early marriage / teenage pregnancies and substance abuse among youths in Baruten Local Government area. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that, Health talk should be extended beyond youth groups and fora to other community members in the Local Government Area, with respect to unhealthy habits, early marriages/teenage pregnancies and Substance abuse.

Keywords: Health Talk, Influence, Youths, Wellbeing, Substance abuse.

Introduction

Health is a complete state of physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of diseases or infirmity (World Health Organization, 1946). Actualization of healthy status in an individual will become difficult, in individuals who are not informed, found indulging in all forms of unhealthy habits for example substance abuse, early marriage and teenage pregnancy, indiscriminate and unprotected sex practices. Health Talks are free community seminars held each month particularly for the youths, featuring presentations by leading physicians and health professionals. These discussions (health talk) provides an in-depth look at individual health concerns such as diabetes self-management, chronic pain and cancer, loneliness / isolation, substance abuse, early marriage and teenage pregnancy, their implications and ways of preventing them. Each lecture is followed by a question-and-answer period.

Emily (2014), outlined six unhealthy habits that are as bad as smoking as follows: (i) sitting all day without exercise causes breast, colon, prostate and lung cancer, (ii) eating too much meat and cheese, (iii) cooking with gases causes pollution with effects equal to smoking, (iv) cooking with wrong oil, (v) tanning indoors 420,000 cases of skin cancer, (vi) Not getting enough sleep makes you cranky causing blood pressure, heart attack, stroke obesity and a host of other health problems. The youths constitute 60% of African population and 36.9% of its workforce (Ibrahim, 2012). Devastatingly too, girls in Sub-Saharan Africa have the highest rate of early marriage and early motherhood, as well as the highest maternal and child mortality rate for young mothers, thus accounting for high rate of youth unemployment and under-employment (Ibrahim, 2012).

The youths are the bed rock of every society who dominates the active workforce in the development of every nation. However, a critical examination of the Nigerian society shows that the youth are not properly taken care of with particular reference to joblessness and under employment. Consequences of these two economic issues result to tendencies with negative impact on the society which includes social vices like, insurgencies of violence, armed robberies, prostitutions, kidnapping and hired assassins among others (Paul & Moser, 2009). Suzanne, Jennifer & Amy, (2010), opined that unemployment affects the health of an individual in the following ways depression, stress, unhealthy habits, isolation or loneliness and the risk of substance abuse. In view of the afore mentioned, health talk for the youth especially at the grass root will ameliorate in no small way all the violence being perpetrated by irate unemployed youths in the society.

According to Michele (2013), Loneliness is bad for health and is known to shorten lives—but experts were not sure if the real culprit was the pain and stress of loneliness, as opposed to a lack of social connectedness. Now psychologists have untangled the two factors and discovered that even superficial contact with other people may improve our health. The findings, published online on March 25 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA, suggest that even brief social contact that

does not involve a close emotional bond—such as small talk with a neighbor or a bus driver—could extend a person's life.

Frank, Furstenberg, Judith, Levine & Jeanne, (1990) reported that despite efforts to reduce its incidence, teenage child bearing remains a pressing social concern. The premature parenthood is widely believed to jeopardize seriously the life chances of young mothers and their children, contributing to the impoverishment of the society. These teenagers will be especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of adolescent parenthood, such as school dropout, economic dependency among others. There may be knowledge of how many drugs of abuse – cocaine, heroin and nicotine – work, but less about how they lead to addiction. Studies of the brain-learning systems concerned are addressing the causes of addiction, with the intent of developing better treatments. Drug addiction — which is increasingly seen as a neuropsychiatric disorder — places an enormous burden on society through its repercussions on crime rate and healthcare. The economic costs of addiction have been estimated at 80 billion dollars in the United States alone, and many Western countries have invested heavily in research towards understanding, treating and preventing addiction (Trevor & Barry, 1999).

Youth health is the range of approaches to preventing, detecting or treating young people's health and well being (WHO, 2001). The term adolescent and young people are often used interchangeably, as are the terms Adolescent Health and Youth Health. Young people's health is often complex and requires a comprehensive, biopsychosocial approach (NSW Dept of Health, 2010). Some young people engage in risky behaviours that affect their health and therefore the majority of health problems are psychosocial. These behaviours are established as a young person and go on to become the lifestyles of adults leading to chronic health problems. Social, cultural and environmental factors are all important for consideration (Chown et al. 2004).

Young people have specific health problems and developmental needs that differ from those of children or adults: The causes of ill-health in adolescents are mostly psychosocial rather biological. Young people often engage in health risk behaviours that reflect the processes of adolescent development: experimentation and exploration, including using drugs and alcohol, sexual behaviour, and other risk taking that affect their physical and mental health (AIHW, 2007). The case of youths in Baruten Local Government Area is not an exception considering the plights mentioned above especially in the area of personal hygiene, sanitation, teenage pregnancies / early marriages, abuse of tutolin cough syrup, tramadol, indian hemp among others.

WHO, (1986) indicated that people can't achieve their fullest health potentials unless they are able to take control of those things which determines their health. It is in line with ameliorating the fore mentioned health problems that the researchers examined the influence of health talk on youths' well being in Baruten local government area of Kwara State.

Purpose of the Study

The following are the purpose of this Study:

Influence of Health Talk on Youths' Wellbeing in Baruten Local Government

1. To examine the influence of Health talk in the reduction of unhealthy habits among the youth beneficiaries in Baruten local government area.
2. To investigate the influence of Health talk in the reduction of the rate of early marriage / teenage pregnancies among the youth beneficiaries, in Baruten local government.
3. To find out the influence of Health talk in the reduction of substance abuse among the youth beneficiaries in Baruten local government.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions answered in the study:

1. Does Health talk influence the reduction of unhealthy habits among youths in Baruten Local Government Area?
2. Does Health talk influence the reduction of early marriage / teenage pregnancies among youths in Baruten Local Government Area?
3. Does Health talk influence the reduction of substance abuse among youths in Baruten Local Government Area on?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested in the study:

1. Health talk does not significantly influence the reduction of unhealthy habits among youths in Baruten Local Government Area.
2. Health talk does not significantly influence the reduction of early marriages / teenage pregnancies among youths in Baruten Local Government Area.
3. Health talk does not significantly influence the reduction of substance abuse among youths in Baruten Local Government Area.

Methods and Materials

Descriptive research design of the survey method was used for this study. The population of the study comprised all youths across Baruten Local Government Area. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the 268 respondents (participating in health talk) across 11 electoral wards of Baruten Local Government Area. This technique is justified because these groups are where the target youths with the right information on the influence of health talk on their wellbeing.

A researchers' designed questionnaire on the health benefits of Health Talks was administered on youths in Baruten Local Government Area, Kwara State. The questionnaire comprised 15 items which elicited information from each of the postulated hypotheses. The 4-point Likert scale of "Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed, (SD) Disagreed (D)" pattern was adopted.

Researchers' designed questionnaire validated and pilot tested with a reliability coefficient of 0.71r was used for data collection with the aid of two trained research assistants. In all, a total of 268 copies of the questionnaire were administered during the groups' monthly seminars where almost all the members were present and were collected

at the point of response to maintain high retrieval rate. The data emanating from the study were subjected to appropriate inferential statistics of chi-square at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Results and Discussion of Findings

Test of Hypotheses on the influence of health talk on youths' wellbeing in Baruten L.G. A. of Kwara State, was carried out using the Likert modified format on four points rating of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Strongly Disagreed and Disagreed. Data relating to the hypotheses were tested by using the inferential statistics of chi-square to calculate the frequency counts of the respondents at alpha level of 0.05 and results presented in tables below.

Hypothesis 1

Health talk does not significantly influence the reduction of unhealthy habits among youths in Baruten Local Government Area.

Table 1: Chi-square analysis on Health talk and unhealthy habits among youths in Baruten L.G.A.

S/ N	VARIABLES	SA	A	D	SD	X ²	DF	TABLE VALUE	Decision
1	Health talk has improved the nutritional status of beneficiaries	73	60	103	32	229.87	12	21.03	Ho Rejected
2	there is improvement in the attitude of beneficiaries to disease prevention	57	63	68	80				
3	Beneficiaries are now living on with improved personal hygiene	49	49	107	63				
4	The beneficiaries now sports as health promotion activities.	71	70	67	60				
5	The scheme has reduced prostitution and prevalence of HIV/AIDS among the beneficiaries	77	40	121	30				

Significance > 0.05 alpha level.

Table 1 revealed that the calculated chi-square (X²) value of 229.87 was greater than the table value of 21.03. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that, Health talk significantly influenced the reduction of unhealthy habits among youths

Influence of Health Talk on Youths' Wellbeing in Ilorin Local Government

in Baruten Local Government Area. The prevalence of unhealthy habits among the youth was very high before the launching of health talk in Baruten L.G. A. of Kwara State.

Hypothesis 2

Health talk does not significantly influence the reduction of early marriages / teenage pregnancies among youths in Baruten Local Government Area.

Table 2: Chi-square analysis on: Health talk and reduction of early marriages / teenage pregnancies among youths in Baruten L.G A.

S/N	VARIABLES	SA	A	D	SD	X ²	DF	TABLE VALUE	Decision
6	Health talk has reduced early marriage among the beneficiaries	49	55	54	110				
7	Health talk has reduced teenage pregnancy among beneficiaries.	68	49	101	50				
8	Health talk has reduced multiple sex partnership among beneficiaries.	11	13	196	48	497.67	12	21.03	Ho Rejected
9	Health talk has reduced abortion among female beneficiaries	62	30	78	98				
10	Health talk has reduced abandoned babies among beneficiaries.	65	83	20	100				

Significance > 0.05 alpha level.

Table 2 revealed that the calculated chi-square (X²) value of 497.67 was greater than the table value of 21.03. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that, health talk significantly influenced the reduction of early marriages / teenage pregnancies among youths beneficiaries in Baruten local government area. The prevalence of early marriages / teenage pregnancies among the youth was very high before the initiation of Health talk in Baruten L.G. A. of Kwara State.

Hypothesis 3

Health talk does not significantly influence the reduction of substance abuse among youths in Baruten Local Government Area.

Table 3: Chi- square analysis on: Health talk and reduction of substance abuse among youths in Baruten L.G A.

S/N	VARIABLES	SA	A	D	SD	X ²	DF	TABLE VALUE	Decision
11	There is improvement in the attitude of the beneficiaries to drug use	71	81	90	26	133.67	12	21.03	Ho Rejected
12	Health talk has reduced prevalence of psychological disorders.	86	69	83	30				
13	Beneficiaries of the Health talk are now involved in the fight against substance abuse.	69	96	48	55				
14	There is reduction in the number of youth who smoke as a result of the Health talk.	51	99	54	64				
15	Beneficiaries are now aware of the health implications of alcohol	67	101	51	49				

Significance > 0.05 alpha level.

Table 5 revealed that the calculated chi-square (X²) value of 133.67 was greater than the table value of 21.03. Therefore, the stated null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that, Health talk significantly influenced the reduction of substance abuse among youths in Baruten local government area. This is against the high prevalence of drug abuse like tutolin cough syrup, tramadol, cigarette and indian hemp among the youth before the initiation of Health talk in Baruten L.G. A. of Kwara State.

Discussion of Findings

1. The findings from this study revealed that Health talk significantly influenced the reduction of unhealthy habits among the youth in Baruten L. G. A. This finding happens to be quite in line with the objectives of health talk as against the prevalence of unhealthy habits among the youth before the initiation of Health talk in Baruten L.G. A. of Kwara State. The youth from their responses confirmed that with health talk they now have an improved sound nutrition, personal hygiene, and are proactive in environmental sanitation. This finding is in line with the position of (WHO, 2001) that youth health is the range of approaches towards preventing, detecting or treating young people's health and well being. NSW Dept of Health, (2010) also stated that young people's health is often complex and requires a comprehensive, biopsychosocial approach.

Influence of Health Talk on Youths' Wellbeing in Baruten Local Government

2. The findings also revealed that Health talk significantly influenced the reduction of early marriages / teenage pregnancies among the youth in Baruten local government area. This is against the prevalent rate of early marriage / teenage pregnancies among the youth before the initiation of Health talk in Baruten L.G. A. of Kwara State. The youth from their responses agreed that with health talk, cases of early marriages and unwanted teenage pregnancies will be reduced especially among those that participated. This is also against the report of Frank, et al (1990) that despite efforts to reduce its incidence, teenage childbearing remains a pressing social concern.

3. The findings also revealed that, Health talk significantly influenced the reduction of substance abuse among the youth in Baruten local government area. This is against the prevalence rate of drug abuse among the youth before the initiation of Health talk in Baruten L.G. A. of Kwara State. The youth testified that they are better informed with health talk and will not indulge in abuse of drugs especially, tutolin cough syrup, tramadol, cigarette and Indian hemp. The finding is in line with (WHO, 1986) that people can't achieve their fullest health potentials unless they are able to take control of those things which determines their health. With health talk the youth will be able to take control of their health.

Conclusion

Based on the findings from this study, the following conclusions were established:

Health talk programme has significantly influenced the reduction of unhealthy habits among the youth in the area. This was evident in the youths' testimonies that they now have improved standard of living with sound hygiene and good nutrition among the youth as a result of Health talk programme. They now live with better personal hygiene, safer sexual habits among others in Baruten Local Government Area. So it enables them imbibe the attitude of general healthy lifestyle. This is as against the prevalence of such cases before the initiation of Health talk in the area.

Health talk has significantly influenced the reduction of the rate of early marriages / teenage pregnancies among the youth, beneficiaries in Baruten local government area. This was very high among the youth before the opportunity of Health talk programme. Under aged youths were involved in early marriages and parenthood without the idea of its implications with high rate of teenage pregnancies resulting from youthful exuberance and inquisitiveness among the youth. With health talk they said they are now better informed and will not indulge in such practices again.

Health talk programme has significantly influenced the reduction in the abuse of substances among youth in the area. The abuse of drugs especially, tutolin cough syrup, tramadol, cigarette and Indian hemp has reduced drastically among the youth, especially those who had the opportunity of Health talk and some others who never had the opportunity were informed by their counter parts that had it across Baruten L.G.A. This is against the prevalence of such cases before the initiation of Health talk in the area.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers made the following recommendations:

1. Health talk should be extended beyond youth groups and fora to other community members in the Local Government Area. This is towards improving their health consciousness such that all forms of unhealthy habits like indiscriminate unprotected sex practices, poor personal hygiene among others will be ameliorated.
2. Measures should be in place to improve females' participation in youth groups' membership and health talk so as to keep discouraging early marriages / teenage pregnancies among the youth.
3. Pharmaceutical personnels and Officers of the NDLEA should be invited as resource persons on Substance abuse during health talks with the youth. This if ensured will pave way for all encompassing health/legal and knowledge/implications of substance abuse among the youth across the entire area.

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