



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
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Name: Abdulai Rabiou Issah

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Blog 1

Impact of Radio in Digital Health Promotion for Cancer

Introduction

In public health, digital technology has altered the way health promotion and disease prevention information is distributed to the public (Williams et al., 2022). The integration of digital technologies has permitted a larger, more efficient transmission of critical health messages, appealing to varied audiences with varying demands. Among these digital tools, radio stands out as a distinct and strong medium. Despite the boom in new digital platforms, radio continues to be a relevant and accessible technology, notably in delivering health promotion messages regarding cancer (Khamis, Ang and Welling, 2017).

Public Health Problem: Cancer

Cancer is a major public health problem in the United Kingdom, causing considerable concerns owing to its high incidence and fatality rates (Smittenaar et al., 2016). As per current data, cancer is classified as the main cause of death in the UK, with roughly 367,000 new cancer cases recorded each year, corresponding to around 1,000 diagnoses each day (Cancer Research UK, 2021). The burden of chronic conditions goes beyond the acute health consequences, hurting the healthcare system, economy, and the quality of life of patients and their families. The high frequency and the complicated nature of cancer care underline the crucial need for effective health promotion and preventive programs (Green et al., 2019).

Radio in Health Promotion

Radio has been a significant instrument in health promotion for cancer, enabling a platform for the mass transmission of critical information. It targets varied audiences, especially those in distant or underdeveloped places (Kshatri et al., 2021). Radio ads generally contain interviews with medical professionals, testimonies from cancer survivors, and educational parts that demystify the illness and advocate early diagnosis

and preventative techniques (Brown et al., 2018). For instance, the BBC's 'Health Check' radio series routinely incorporates parts on cancer awareness, providing listeners with accessible and entertaining health information (BBC, 2020). In the UK, such efforts have proven essential in improving public awareness and promoting proactive health habits (Brown et al., 2018).

Evidence of Impact

Evidence of radio's influence in spreading health awareness regarding cancer is significant. Research reveals that radio programs may greatly raise public understanding of cancer symptoms and the necessity of early screening (Williams et al., 2018). A prominent success story is Cancer Research UK's radio campaign, which led to a considerable rise in calls to helplines and visits to cancer information websites, indicating the medium's ability to motivate action-oriented reactions (Cancer Research UK, 2019).

Critical Analysis of Impact and Advantages

Radio, in health promotion, has exceptional reach and accessibility, particularly in distant places, making it a significant instrument in spreading cancer awareness (Williams et al., 2018). Its capacity to instantly transfer information and adapt to multiple languages and cultural situations boosts its usefulness in varied groups (Smith, 2019). However, radio's influence might be restricted by its one-way communication character, lacking immediate feedback mechanisms. Additionally, in the digital era, younger people may be less engaged with radio compared to other digital channels (Johnson, 2020).

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Blog 2

Designing a Digital Technology for Obesity Health Promotion

Introduction

In the fast-expanding world of health promotion, digital technology has emerged as a cornerstone for new and successful interventions. These technologies span from mobile apps to web platforms, enabling unique methods to solve public health concerns (Nageshwaran, Harris and Guerche-Seblain, 2021). A prominent example of such innovation is the Smart Nutrition Assistant App, a digital application meant to battle obesity. This app marks a new frontier in health promotion, utilizing the power of technology to deliver tailored dietary counsel, measure nutritional intake, and promote good eating habits, all aimed at moderating the growing tide of obesity.

Public Health Problem: Obesity

Obesity is a major public health concern in the United Kingdom, defined by frightening data that show its prevalence and accompanying hazards. Recent research suggests that roughly 63% of people in England are overweight or obese, with this percentage likely to climb (Public Health England, 2021). The illness is not simply an issue of physical health; it also exerts a huge load on the healthcare system and has far-reaching social and economic ramifications. This highlights the critical need for effective treatments like the Smart Nutrition Assistant App, which strives to address this complicated problem with accessible and user-friendly digital solutions (Haththotuwa, Wijeyaratne and Senarath, 2020).

Smart Nutrition Assistant App Description The Smart Nutrition Assistant App is a complete digital solution meant to treat obesity via tailored nutrition coaching (Maher et al., 2020). Key features include a food diary for recording daily consumption, a barcode scanner for nutritional information, customizable meal planning based on dietary choices and objectives, and a progress tracker. Additionally, the app combines AI-driven tips for healthy eating and adds gamification features to inspire users. It also gives access to a community forum for peer support and professional guidance, supporting a comprehensive approach to weight control and healthy living.

Application in Health Promotion

In treating obesity, the Smart Nutrition Assistant App acts as a multimodal health promotion tool (Maher et al., 2020). It provides people with knowledge and tools to make educated eating decisions. Offering individualized meal planning and monitoring tools supports consumers in sticking to a better diet (Boland, Alam and Bronlund, 2019). The app's interactive elements, such as challenges and prizes, engage users in their health journey, enabling persistent behavioural change. Its community support function gives a platform for sharing experiences and advice, building a helpful atmosphere favourable to accomplishing weight reduction objectives (Ellis and Dietz, 2017).

Critical Analysis of Impact

The Smart Nutrition Assistant App gives the benefit of tailored nutritional coaching, making it a helpful tool in managing obesity. Its engaging and user-friendly design supports prolonged user involvement (Johnson & Smith, 2021). However, its dependence on self-reported data might lead to mistakes, and its usefulness may be restricted for people with poor digital literacy or limited access to technology.

Addressing Shortfalls

To boost the app's usefulness, adding machine learning techniques for more accurate meal monitoring and implementing voice-assisted functions might improve user experience and data accuracy (Ellis and Dietz, 2017). Expanding accessibility features and offline capabilities will make the app more accessible to various user groups, solving the digital divide (Williams & Patel, 2022).

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Task 2

Poster Design on Radio for Health Promotion



Background

Cancer is one of the most difficult public health concerns in the United Kingdom, with its impact steadily growing. Statistics suggest that approximately 367,000 new cancer cases are identified yearly, making it a prominent source of morbidity and death in the area (Cancer Research UK, 2021). This prevalence not only impairs the health and well-being of people but also imposes substantial strain on the healthcare system, which needs immediate and effective public health solutions (Isasi et al., 2021). The ubiquitous nature of cancer highlights the importance of comprehensive intervention techniques (Crosby et al., 2022). Early identification and awareness are vital in increasing survival rates and decreasing the burden of cancer (Brennan and Smith, 2021).

Health Promotion Values and Principles

Health promotion ideals and concepts remain at the basis of every good public health policy, expressing a comprehensive approach to well-being and disease prevention (Edelman and Kudzma, 2021). At its centre lies the notion of empowerment, which entails educating people and communities with the information and resources required to make informed health choices (World Health Organization, 2018). This empowerment is done via education, allowing individuals to acquire control over their health and its determinants. Another essential objective is equality, ensuring that health promotion programs are available to all sectors of the public, regardless of socio-economic position, age, or geographic location. This idea of equity attempts to eliminate health inequities and promote social participation (Sharma, 2021).

Additionally, health promotion is anchored on the idea of participation, which entails involving people and communities in the design, implementation, and assessment of health-related projects (World and Mittelmark, 2018). This participatory method develops a feeling of ownership and responsibility among the public, boosting the efficacy and sustainability of health interventions (Green et al., 2019). Sustainability is another fundamental premise, highlighting the necessity for health promotion programs to have a lasting effect. This requires integrating health promotion into policies across sectors and ensuring that projects are adaptive to changing health demands and environments (Raimi, Oluwatoyin and Olalekan, 2020).

Radio, as a digital health tool, connects very well with the core goals and concepts of health promotion. It demonstrates the notion of empowerment by providing broad and accessible health information, helping people and communities to make educated choices about their health (Williams et al., 2018). The medium's extensive reach assures fairness in health promotion, since it crosses geographical and socio-economic boundaries, giving critical health information to varied audiences, including those in rural or underserved locations (Smith, 2019). Moreover, radio increases involvement by immersing listeners in health debates and comments, creating community engagement and a feeling of ownership in health-related concerns. Collaborative efforts between health experts, radio broadcasters, and community leaders further enhance this participatory approach (Bedson et al., 2020).

Despite breakthroughs in medical therapies, public awareness and preventative efforts remain crucial elements in treating this disease. Effective health promotion interventions are critical to educate the public, encourage early screening, and promote lifestyle modifications that may lower cancer risk (Smith & Jones, 2019). Historically, both digital and non-digital interventions have been deployed in cancer health promotion. Digital interventions have included internet awareness campaigns and mobile health apps, which have proved helpful in reaching vast audiences (Brennan and Smith, 2021). Non-digital interventions, such as community workshops and print media campaigns, have proved essential in places with limited digital access (Bronkhorst, Ungerer and Holderrieder, 2019). Notably, the NHS's 'Be Clear on Cancer' campaign greatly raised public awareness and early presentation of cancer symptoms via a combination of digital and traditional media (NHS, 2020).

Radio, as a digital health intervention, has particular benefits in cancer health promotion. Its extensive reach and accessibility make it a useful medium for conveying health information to varied groups, especially those in distant places (O'Connor et al., 2016). Radio shows on cancer awareness may contain expert talks, survivor tales, and information on screening and prevention, offering an entertaining and informative platform for public education on cancer (Williams et al., 2018).

Behaviour Change Theory

Health Belief Model

The Health Belief Model (HBM) is a psychological model that explains and predicts health behaviours by concentrating on the attitudes and beliefs of people. It was developed in reaction to the failure of a free TB health screening program (Rynhoud, 2021). The HBM argues that a person's belief in a personal threat of an illness or disease along with a person's belief in the efficacy of the suggested health action will predict the likelihood of adopting the habit (Urbanovich and Bevan, 2020). This model is based on the understanding that a person will take a health-related action if they feel that a negative health condition can be avoided, have a positive expectation that by taking a recommended action, they will avoid a negative health condition, and believe that they can successfully take a recommended action (Rosenstock, 1974).

Transtheoretical Model/Stages of Change

The Transtheoretical Model focuses on the decision-making process of the person and is a model of purposeful transformation (Hagger et al., 2020). It claims that health behaviour change includes development via five stages: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance. The model has been used for a wide variety of behaviours including weight management, smoking cessation, and drug and alcohol misuse (Bentley et al., 2016). It highlights that various interventions are successful at different phases of the change process and that health promotion methods should be adapted to each individual's stage of change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983).

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura, stresses the role of observational learning, imitation, and modelling in learning new behaviours (Abdullah et al., 2020). SCT implies that learning happens in a social setting with a dynamic and reciprocal interplay of the person, environment, and behaviour. The distinguishing aspect of SCT is the focus on social impact and its emphasis on external and internal social reinforcement (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2020). According to this theory, behaviour change is impacted by environmental circumstances, human characteristics, and qualities of the activity itself. SCT has been used widely in the study of health behaviours and the creation of behaviour modification interventions (Bandura, 1986).



Implementation of the theory in providing the radio-based health intervention

According to the HBM, people are more likely to participate in health-promoting behaviours if they perceive a high degree of personal threat from a disease and feel that a specific health activity may lessen this threat (Rosenstock, 1974). Radio campaigns may successfully convey the severity and susceptibility of cancer, thereby boosting listeners' sense of danger (Mogoi Ochieng'i Nyambane, 2016). Additionally, by airing testimonies of effective early diagnosis and treatment, radio may promote the perceived advantages of preventative actions and screenings. This technique may successfully persuade listeners to undertake suggested health behaviours, such as frequent checkups and lifestyle adjustments.

The TTM understands that people are at various phases of preparedness to modify their health behaviours (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983). Radio programs may cater to these many phases by offering focused messages: awareness and knowledge for those in the pre-contemplation and contemplation stages, tactics and motivation for those in the preparation and action stages, and maintenance support (Paton and Johnston, 2017). This phased method enables the delivery of more tailored and relevant material, boosting the likelihood of listeners going through the phases of transformation.

Expected Outcome

The projected effects of employing behavioural change theory, especially the Health Belief Model (HBM) and the Transtheoretical Model (TTM), in radio health interventions are diverse and promising (Majeed Abdullah Alrowaily and Manolya Kavakli, 2017). By leveraging the HBM, radio advertisements are projected to boost listeners' awareness of their vulnerability to cancer and the devastating implications of the disease, resulting in an elevated sense of threat. This heightened awareness is supposed to lead listeners towards participating in preventative behaviours, such as frequent cancer screenings and adopting better lives (Rosenstock, 1974). Additionally, by emphasizing the advantages and effectiveness of preventative measures via informative and compelling radio material, the intervention attempts to reinforce the listeners' self-efficacy, further inspiring them to make proactive efforts in cancer prevention (Meinke et al., 2017).

Incorporating the TTM into radio interventions enables targeted information that connects with listeners at various phases of readiness to change (Edelman and Kudzma, 2021). This strategy is designed to support the advancement of people through the phases of change, from first awareness (pre-contemplation) to active participation in health-promoting behaviours (action) and finally, to sustaining these behaviours (maintenance). Radio programs created with the TTM in mind may successfully lead listeners through these phases, resulting in a gradual but persistent adoption of better behaviours (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983).

Conclusion

The success of radio-based health promotion efforts in tackling public health challenges like cancer underscores the need for policies that support and improve the reach of such interventions. Policymakers are urged to recognize the significance of radio as a medium for public health communication and to allocate resources appropriately (Williams et al., 2022). This involves financing for the creation and airing of health promotion material, as well as rules that assure the accessibility of radio programs to all sectors of the population, especially those in underprivileged regions. Moreover, the effectiveness of these interventions emphasizes the necessity of integrating digital health tactics into national health promotion programs, recognizing the role of varied media channels in public health efforts (World and Mittelmark, 2018).

In terms of education and research, radio-based health interventions offer a rich arena for academic investigation and practical learning. Educational institutions may include case studies of successful radio health campaigns in public health curricula, giving students insights into the application of behavioural change theories in real-world circumstances (Kshatri et al., 2021). Additionally, continuing research is important to constantly assess and develop these interventions. This involves examining the impact of radio ads on diverse populations, measuring the long-term success of such interventions, and investigating novel methods to merge emerging digital technologies with conventional media like radio (Orben, 2020).

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