Applying Research Skills; Limited Access to Medical Care

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Healthcare services are an integral part of the growth and development of human beings. Access to excellent healthcare services is a necessity. However, not everyone across the world has access to essential healthcare services. Consumers face limited access to healthcare services for several reasons. Some of these reasons include limited healthcare providers, geographical location, financial constraints coupled with lack of or expensive medical insurance plans, mobility, and transportation issues. Ensuring proper and easy access to medical care services is essential; it is one way through which governments ensure the attainment of the universal healthcare plan.

As a healthcare service, I believe governments and other stakeholders can help bridge the gap between consumers and access to excellent medical services. My interest is to realize a world where patients have easy access to better and exceptional healthcare services. I have encountered situations where patients have had to endure much suffering for prolonged periods before they could finally be accorded medical services. Such cases have helped me realize the importance of ready healthcare provision facilities. If every individual (from the government, private partners, and other stakeholders) play their part to ensure consumers get easy access to medical care services, everyone will be happy.

**Identification of Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles**

Various scholars and several journals have published peer-reviewed and scholarly approved research articles on the topic of limited access to healthcare. I accessed academic material on the healthcare topic by using Capella University online library search engine services, Summon. Through the search engine, I accessed academic databases related to healthcare services, including PubMed central and ProQuest. Some of the keywords used during the material search include *chronic disease*, *consumer health information*, *health information research, rural nursing,* and *health-seeking behaviour*. I also made sure to limit the articles to scholarly and peer-reviewed journals. The search was also limited to *medicine* and *nursing* subjects; again, I only selected articles published within the last five years.

**Credibility and Information Relevance Assessment**

I settled on articles that were not more than five years and published by renowned authors who had done extensive work in the medical field. To assess the relevance of information in the articles, I made sure the facts published were acceptable and promoted patient safety, quality care, and other developments in the medical field.

**Annotated Bibliography**

Bhandari, N. (2014). Seeking health information online: does limited healthcare access matter? Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association: JAMIA (1067-5027), 21 (6), p. 1113. Retrieved from <https://www-ncbi-nlm-nih-gov.library.capella.edu/pmc/articles/PMC4215038/>

This article scrutinizes the relationship of obstacles to healthcare access with consumer’s online searches on medical-related information, online communication with physicians, and the application of health chat groups. This research was conducted with the use of data from the 2009 “National Health Interview” survey. According to the authors, consumers with financial constraints limiting their access to physician appointments were more likely to use internet resources to look for healthcare-related information about their medical conditions. Moreover, individuals who had difficulties seeking appointments with physicians were using health chat groups more. The study concluded that the use of internet offered a low-cost avenue to accessing healthcare information, especially for people who were in difficult financial conditions or who were miles away from medical care facilities. Additionally, those who had the financial power but with schedules conflicting with their clinical appointments also resorted to internet use. This study is essential since it points out the methods used by consumers due to limited healthcare services.

Lee, K., Hoti, K., Hughes, J. D., & Emmerton, L. (2014). Dr Google and the Consumer: A Qualitative Study Exploring the Navigational Needs and Online Health Information-Seeking Behaviors of Consumers with Chronic Health Conditions. Journal of Medical Internet Research, 16(12), e262. Retrieved from <http://doi.org.library.capella.edu/10.2196/jmir.3706>

The primary purpose of this article was to assess the directional desires of consumers suffering from various chronic health conditions in seeking healthcare information online. Additionally, the article also determined the potential barriers to online navigation which the consumers were facing. In the study, the authors employed the application of semi-structured interviews with adult consumers who had acknowledged the use of online services to seek information on healthcare topics. The study concluded that several people had resorted to the use of online tools to seek information on healthcare topics. Furthermore, the authors also identified several barriers to the use of online healthcare services by consumers. Among the obstacles determined by the study included both intrinsic and extrinsic one; extrinsic barriers include inconsistency in information among various online platforms, while inherent barriers included illiteracy in internet health services. The study concluded that extrinsic interventions aimed at helping consumers navigate the online health services were not as effective as they thought. This research is vital since it points out the ineffective of online search services for healthcare issues.

Pratt, D. (2015). Telehealth and telemedicine. Albany Law Journal of Science & Technology. (1059-4280), 25 (3), p. 495. <http://www.lexisnexis.com.library.capella.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?shr=t&csi=148364&sr=TITLE(%22Telehealth+telemedicine+in+2015%22)+and+date+is+2015>

This article's primary purpose is to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both telehealth and telemedicine. Telehealth and telemedicine are innovations that promote the use of technology in the medical field. Technology has proven to be a game-changer in the field of medicine, contributing to efficiency and excellent medical care services. According to the author, telehealth and telemedicine have the advantage of preventing fatal and emergency situations among people with chronic health conditions. On the other hand, the author determines that such technology is difficult to use in some patients, is expensive, and also subject to licensing and different rules and regulations. This article is essential because it points out some of the technological developments that help patients get access to medical care; the article points out the strengths and weaknesses of these developments.

Ware, P., Bartlett, S. J., Paré, G., Symeonidis, I., Tannenbaum, C., Bartlett, G., … Ahmed, S. (2017). Using eHealth Technologies: Interests, Preferences, and Concerns of Older Adults. Interactive Journal of Medical Research, 6(1), e3. <http://doi.org.library.capella.edu/10.2196/ijmr.4447>

The primary purpose of this article is to determine the interests, preferences, and concerns of the elderly in the use of the internet and other eHealth platforms in the management of their health. The study entailed the use of two major focus groups of participants aged over fifty years. The study concluded that although the online platforms and other eHealth applications were proving to be helpful, the consumers, especially the adult ones, had concerns over them. Some of the matters included the ease of usage of the applications and issues associated with patient privacy. This article is essential since it highlights the concerns and challenges faced by older patients in the use of online platforms and other eHealth applications.

**Learning Summary Points**

From the articles, I got exposed to the issues contributing to limited access to healthcare. The papers also helped me realize the widespread use of the internet and other eHealth platforms by consumers to access medical care services. From the articles, I have learned that although the internet and other eHealth applications have revolutionized the medical world, most patients still face challenges in using them; there are also privacy concerns.

References

Bhandari, N. (2014). Seeking health information online: does limited healthcare access matter? Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association: JAMIA (1067-5027), 21 (6), p. 1113. <https://www-ncbi-nlm-nih-gov.library.capella.edu/pmc/articles/PMC4215038/>

Lee, K., Hoti, K., Hughes, J. D., & Emmerton, L. (2014). Dr Google and the Consumer: A Qualitative Study Exploring the Navigational Needs and Online Health Information-Seeking Behaviors of Consumers with Chronic Health Conditions. Journal of Medical Internet Research, 16(12), e262. <http://doi.org.library.capella.edu/10.2196/jmir.3706>

Pratt, D. (2015). Telehealth and telemedicine. Albany Law Journal of Science & Technology. (1059-4280), 25 (3), p. 495. <http://www.lexisnexis.com.library.capella.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?shr=t&csi=148364&sr=TITLE(%22Telehealth+telemedicine+in+2015%22)+and+date+is+2015>

Ware, P., Bartlett, S. J., Paré, G., Symeonidis, I., Tannenbaum, C., Bartlett, G., … Ahmed, S. (2017). Using eHealth Technologies: Interests, Preferences, and Concerns of Older Adults. Interactive Journal of Medical Research, 6(1), e3. <http://doi.org.library.capella.edu/10.2196/ijmr.4447>