

Healthcare service needs among the M40 population in Malaysia: what do they perceive?



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Introduction

The ability to perceive the needs for care is how one perceives the needs & desires for health care. It is subjected to factors such as health literacy, knowledge about health and beliefs related to health and sickness. 1-3

The Levesque's framework defines access as the opportunity to identify, seek, reach, obtain, or use healthcare and to ensure the fulfillment of the needs for these services 4

In order to meet their expectations for healthcare, they tend to utilise various channels or means to obtain required information and knowledge on the disease and its treatments before seeking help from a doctor

Objective - is to explore factors affecting the ability to perceive the need for care among the middle-income (M40) population.

Method

Approach: Exploratory Qualitative Study with purposive sampling

Data collection: Virtual online interview from October to November 2020

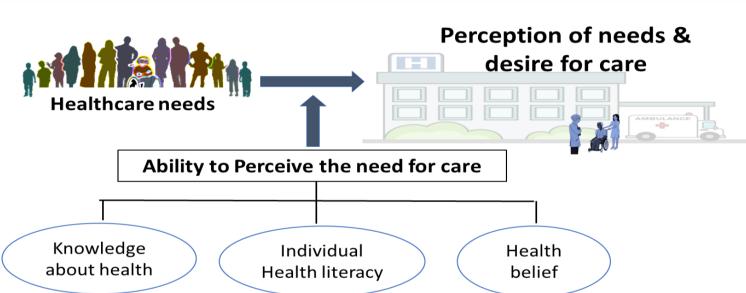
Sampling: 78 Malaysian adults aged 25 years old above M40 group (monthly household income: RM4,850 RM10,959⁵)

Analysis: Thematic analysis using NVivo 12 guided by the Levesque's Conceptual Framework

Study location : Conducted at 15 localities (urban and rural): Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Putrajaya, Kedah, Johor, Kelantan, Sabah, Sarawak, Perlis, Penang, Perak, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, and Terengganu.

Results

Characteristic	N=78	%
Age group		
21-30 years old	33	42.2
31-40 years old	29	37.3
41-50 years old	14	18.1
51-60 years old	2	2.6
Gender		
Male	39	50
Female	39	50
Occupation		
Government	3	3.8
Private sector	50	64.1
Self- employed	21	26.9
Others	4	5.1
Education		
Secondary	21	26.9
Tertiary	57	73.1



Basic knowledge:

- Own health
- Healthcare facilities
- Services available

"I went [to the clinic] late because it is located near the town, so if I go early in the morning, it (the traffic) should be jammed... usually I go [to the clinic] after peak hour." Female,25



Obtain additional information from various sources; ability to understand & appraise the information received

- Information regarding illness
- & symptomTreatment needed
- Severity of illness

"I mean even if you look for information online, you have to verify the information if it's legit information or not, so yeah I'll see if it's from a very legit or well known website okay, then I would probably trust the contents more and then of course I'll check for second opinion based on the similar scope that I'm looking at that particular website, so I understand more. Sometimes they might omit a part of the research or a part of the contents which was not explained in the website it so yeah I'll usually double check." Male,32

Had their own beliefs related to health and ways to overcome their illness

- Self-medication
- Consuming supplement

"Normally, I would try with whatever alternative before go to see doctor. For example, if I feel chest tight, I will use the diffuser or essential oils and sometimes I'll just drink chamomile. I'll try to divert and avoid seeing doctor" Female, 34





Conclusion

This study revealed participants have knowledge about health, health literacy, and health beliefs. However, miscommunications and misinformation still exist. Hence, it's crucial for healthcare practitioners to be trained in delivering the needed information to the clients in a manner that would enhance their acceptance and understanding of their disease and treatment.

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