

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND CULTURAL BELIEFS ABOUT EPILEPSY IN KOLO COMMUNITY, BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder that is noninfectious and common affecting world's population regardless of race, colour, tribe, religion or nationality. The incidence of epilepsy tends to be higher in developing countries than developed countries with a reported prevalence ranging from 5-10 per 1,000 people in developing countries and 2.8-19.5 per 1,000 of the general population worldwide. There are many cultural and superstitious beliefs associated with the causes of epilepsy. The sample size for the study was 152 respondents using Cochran (1963) sample size formula. A structured closed ended interviewer administered questionnaire (IAQ) was used to obtain information in line with the purpose of the study. The period of data collection took three (3) weeks. 150 questionnaires were retrieved from the four (4) selected wards by multistage sampling after a pilot testing was done. Epilepsy as a brain disorder was agreed by (25.3%) and strongly disagreed by (17.4%). The transmission of epilepsy by lizard was strongly disagreed by (21.1%), disagreed by (27.4%). The finding also showed that (34%) strongly disagreed to neither marrying someone with epilepsy nor allow their children make friends with an epileptic individual (30.5%). The result of the hypothesis using chi-square showed a significant relationship between cultural factors and acceptance of epileptic individuals with $P = 0.001$, $\chi^2=19.803$, $N=150$. The study therefore recommends the need for aggressive health education on epilepsy for literate and non-literate members of the community because this will reduce their cultural misconceptions and influence their attitudes positively towards individuals with epilepsy.

Keywords: Attitude, Cultural belief, Epilepsy, Knowledge