

Expert-Based Validated Measures for Improving Quality Healthcare Services Utilization among Elderly Persons: A Cross-Section Survey

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Abstract : Globally, older adults are considered the most vulnerable groups to age-related diseases including diabetes mellitus, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, cancer and osteoporosis. With improved access to quality healthcare services, these complications can be prevented and the incidence rates reduced to the least occurrence. The aim of this study is to validate appropriate measures for improving quality healthcare services utilization among elderly persons in Nigeria and also to determine the significant association within demographic variables. A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted. Using a convenient sampling technique, a total of 400 experts (150 registered nurses and 250 public health professionals) with minimum of doctoral degree qualification were sampled and studied. A structured instrument titled "Expert-Based Healthcare Services Utilization Questionnaire (EBHSUQ) with .83 reliability index was used for data collection. All the statistical data analysis was completed using frequency counts, percentage scores and chi-square statistics. The results were significant at $p \leq 0.05$. It was found that quality healthcare services utilization by elderly persons in Nigeria would be improved if the services are: available (83%), affordable (82%), accessible (79%), suitable (77%), acceptable (77%), continuous (75%) and stress-free (75%). Statistically, significant association existed on quality healthcare services utilization with gender ($p = .03 < .05$) and age ($p = .01 < .05$) while none was observed on work experience ($p = .23 > .05$), marital status ($p = .11 > .05$) and employment category ($p = .09 > .05$). To improve quality healthcare services utilization for elderly persons in Nigeria, the adoption of appropriate measures by Nigerian government and professionals in healthcare sectors are paramount. Therefore, there is need for collaborative efforts by the Nigerian government and healthcare professionals geared towards educating the general public through mass sensitization, awareness campaign, conferences, seminars and workshops for the importance of accessing healthcare services.

Keywords : elderly persons, healthcare services, cross-sectional survey research design, utilization.

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