

Health Literacy in Jordan: Obstacles for Doctors and Quality Patient Care

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Abstract : This study drew conceptually on Communication Accommodation Theory to describe and analyze conversations between doctors and patients to examine the extent to which patients' level of literacy represents one of the linguistic obstacles that may adversely influence the quality of healthcare services in Jordan. A thematic qualitative approach was employed to interpret the phenomena under study, which required direct observation and interviews with doctors (n=6) and patients (n=15) in natural Jordanian medical settings. This generated a comprehensive corpus of audio and videotaped data, which revealed that most doctors expressed dissatisfaction with patients' ability to express themselves and comprehend them as a result of a lack of medical awareness and limited health education. The significance of this study rests on its detailed investigation of the impact of health literacy on patients' health outcomes and while providing unique insights into how low health literacy could contribute to misunderstanding and potential ill-health.

Keywords : doctor-patient communication, health literacy, medical knowledge, communication accommodation theory, qualitative research

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