

FRAMING OF HEALTH MESSAGES: DIABETIC PATIENT'S PERSPECTIVE



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Introduction

- Health messages can be formulated either in positive or negative form. The positive and negative health messages frames have different effects towards individual health behaviour change.
- This study aims to identify whether positive message or negative message will be favoured by diabetic patients in controlling body weight and engaging in physical activities.

Method

Design	: Qualitative method; Focus Group Discussion.
Target group	: Diabetic Patients.
Study sites	: Government Healthcare Facilities.
Instruments	: The interview guide was developed based on literature review on framing messages.
Sampling	: Purposive Sampling.
Data analysis	: All interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed using a thematic analysis.

Frame Messages

Positive message: "I look younger and healthier if I maintain the Body Mass Index by doing physical activity. My body is always healthy, if I eat nutritious food".

("Saya kelihatan lebih muda dan sihat jika mengekalkan Berat Badan Unggul (BMI) dengan melakukan aktiviti fizikal. Badan saya sentiasa sihat, jika saya makan makanan berkhasiat").

Negative message: "If I do not do physical activity, I look lifeless and easy to get sick. I will become fat if I eat fatty foods and my health will be affected if not taking nutritious food".

("Jika saya tidak melakukan aktiviti fizikal, saya kelihatan tidak bermaya dan mudah mendapat penyakit. Saya akan menjadi gemuk jika makan makanan berlemak dan kesihatan saya akan terjejas jika tidak mengambil makanan berkhasiat").

Result

Demographic Characteristic : 94 Diabetic informants (age 50-60 years) involved with interviews. The majority is Malay. Seven main themes as follows :

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| 1 Understanding the message frame | 5 The type of health message is appropriate to change the behaviour |
| 2 Message suitability | 6 Appropriate media channels to convey messages |
| 3 Message preferred | 7 An informant's opinion on health messages |
| 4 Effect of health messages | (see Figure 1) |

Discussion / Conclusion

Majority of the respondents preferred a positive message framework based on their understanding, suitability and past experience.

Most respondents felt that positive message motivates them for a better control of their health while the negative message contains elements of fear and threat does not convincing.

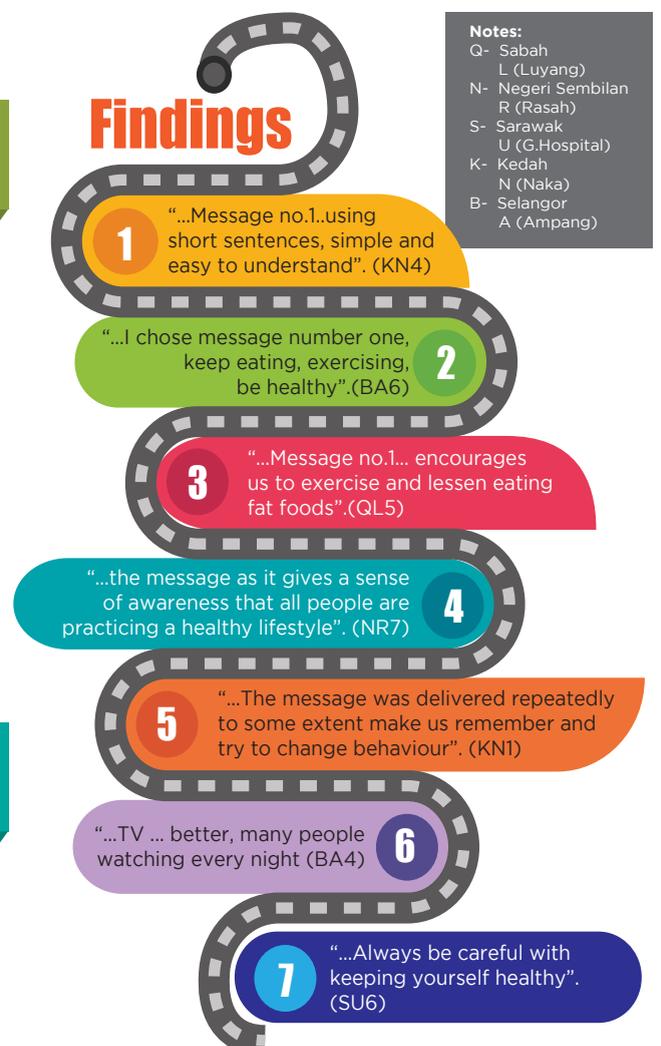
Positive message can increase health care motivation, awareness, knowledge and practice for a better quality of life.

Understanding how patients feel about certain test and interventions can provide a better understanding as to the types of messages that will have the greatest impact.

References

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2. Sherman, D.K., Mann, T. & Updegraff, J.A. 2006. Approach/avoidance motivation, message framing and health behaviour: Understanding the congruency effect. *Motivation and Emotion* 30 (2): 165-169.

FIGURE 1: INFORMANTS STATEMENT BASED ON THE THEME



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