

**THE PERCEPTION AND FACTORS INFLUENCING THE  
UTILIZATION OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES AMONG STUDENTS  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, EDO STATE.**

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**BENIN CITY**

**MARCH, 2024**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,  
SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION,  
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**CERTIFICATION**

We, the undersigned, acknowledge that this research work was carried out by Oimage Comfort Olohigbe in the Department of Health, Safety and Environmental Education, Faculty of Education, University of Benin.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to God Almighty for His Guidance, Provision and Wisdom upon my life, for making this project successful for He is the only one that can be glorified. I also thank my parents for their immense support to making this project come through successfully.

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## ABSTRACT

This study was designed to examine the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State. To guide this study, three research questions were raised. The survey research design was used in conducting the study. The main instrument employed to carry out this study was a self-structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 240. The validity of the instrument was established by giving it to the supervisor and two other experts in the field of the research study. The reliability of the instrument was established using the test-retest method of reliability which yielded a Coefficient of 0.780. The data obtained from the questionnaires were subjected to analysis using frequency counts and percentages.

Results from the study from 240 respondents showed that that the perceptions of the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin includes; doubts about the equipment available in the healthcare facilities, doctors being unpleasant and unfriendly, inadequate staffs in the health centers and the scare of going to the health care centers due to the stories heard about the negligence of the doctors and nurses, also it revealed that that certain factors influence the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin. These factors includes; the availability of the doctors, lengthy cue at the health center, poor quality of treatment received from previous visits and lack of drugs.

At the end of the study, it was recommended that adequate provision of healthcare personnels should be provided to reduce the cue at the health facilities, drugs should be provided for easy reach to reduce the reluctance in going to the pharmacy to buy drugs after being prescribed at the health facility, the school healthcare providers should be friendly, medical appointments should be scheduled for students in order to cater and attend to students properly and students should be guided properly in order to see the need to take control and management of their health.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background to the Study**

Health care Services is vital and necessary for the well being of an individual's health. Healthcare services are the services provided by health workers and healthcare personnel to individuals. Health-care services is an essential aspect of healthcare that helps to diagnose, cure, or ameliorate disease or injury; to improve or maintain function; or to obtain information about the health status and prognosis of individuals. Health care services refers to any services provided by a health care professional, or by any individual working under the supervision of a health care professional, that relates to the diagnosis, prevention, or treatment of any human disease or impairment or the assessment or care of the health of human beings.

Utilization of healthcare services is influenced by the need for care, as well as if people know that they need care, if people want to obtain care, and if care can be accessed. Utilization of health-care services can be appropriate or inappropriate, of high or low quality, and of high or low cost (Kale 2013). In utilizing healthcare services, quality is an essential construct which is separate from access and is related to the achievement of favorable outcomes associated with utilization, not to whether health-care utilization occurs at all or to difficulties in obtaining care (Kale, 2013). Utilization of health care services correlates highly with the need for services. However, some services are needed and not obtained, and others are utilized but not clearly indicated, or are

indicated only after other protocols are followed (Kressin and Groeneveld, 2015).

Utilization of healthcare services refers to the use of health care services, which involves the use of health care services for many reasons including preventing and curing health problems, promoting maintenance of health and well-being, or obtaining information about their health status and prognosis by individuals. This utilization is important for the health status of individuals and the need for health-care services to improve or maintain health are the major determinants of health-care utilization. The World Health Organization states that health is determined by a person's individual characteristics and behaviors, physical environment, and socioeconomic environment (WHO, 2017). People's individual characteristics include their biology and genetics, such as inherited diseases and conditions that require medical care. The prevalence of those conditions differs by sex, age, race and ethnicity, employment status, and other factors. Physical environments can affect health because of pollutants or other environmental health hazards. Individual behaviors, such as smoking or lack of exercise and overeating, also cause health conditions that require health care (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, ODPHP 2017). Utilization of health-care services is greatly influenced by the need for care most times, but that is not the case, for several reasons. Many factors affect the utilization of healthcare services independently of need and are reflected in differences which includes individual perceptions as well, some of which are remediable, among population groups (Lyu, 2017). Some of these factors are

related to biologic or environmental differences among groups, such as disproportionate residence in polluted environments, access to healthful food and adequate housing, and education associated with effective use of health care. Others are related to differences in access, such as health insurance coverage or income needed to obtain services, ease of obtaining services, and discriminatory practices of providers. Access to healthcare services enables individuals and healthcare givers to prevent and better manage illness, while limiting the cost of health service provision and protecting individuals from financial hardship related to health.

In developing countries, the major influencing factors of utilization of healthcare services includes; cost, distance to the nearest health center, discontent with the quality of care, lack of transportation facilities, and excessive cost of healthcare services. The use of healthcare services is an effective means of reducing the risk of morbidity and mortality, especially in places where healthcare services utilization is poor (Adeyemi, 2016). In addition, analyzing the factors influencing the utilization of health services can be useful for taking appropriate decisions and policies. People's perceptions of the services and their ability to pay for them influence their decision to use the available health services. People's opinions and assessments are frequently influenced by the evaluation of elements that their customs and culture value highly, such as politeness, responsiveness, attentiveness, and the perceived skill of the medical staff. People's opinions are shaped by their degree of contentment with the healthcare system and how they view the attitudes of

healthcare professionals, which frequently influences their decision to return in the future.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The utilization of healthcare services by students in University of Benin essential and should not be undermined. It is pertinent that students in the University of Benin should utilize healthcare services in the school community as well as other individuals who are available in the school community. A lot of students reside in the school's halls of residence while the rest stay around off campus and some whose homes are around the environs of the institution come from home. Therefore, it is very important for healthcare services to be made available to the reach of the students and every individual to cater for the health and the well being of the students as well as emergencies. The school environment exposes students to a lot of dangers, such as infection, accident, emotional and physical stress hence, they need for health care services which can be utilized by students to ensure they are protected against these dangers.

The utilization of health care services, however, is influenced by numerous factors including the perception of the individuals which could be towards the quality of care or the accessibility of care. A key factor that affects utilization of healthcare services is funding and accessibility, as it is often difficult to obtain adequate care and health care services in most health facilities due to the inability of these facilities to secure adequate financial resources to provide adequate and essential care.

The government has made provision for school health services with certain specific measures being put in place. There is similarity, however, in the types of services offered from one school system to the next, which is likely the result of several factors. Although it varies across states, majority have made provision for state school nurse consultants, many of whom have distributed sample policy and procedure manuals from their state department of health or education or both, to guide the development and delivery of health services in local settings. The various services have had every aspect of their roles defined and standards for them which provides a system for disseminating information and discharging these school health services. The services include access to primary healthcare, availability of a system for dealing with crisis medical situations, mandated screening and immunization monitoring, system for identification and solution of students health and educational problems, provision of a comprehensive and appropriate health education, provision of a healthful and safe school environment that facilitates learning and provision of a system of evaluation of the effectiveness of the school health program.

However, despite the provision of these services, students still fail to utilize school health services, attributed to their perception about the care and services rendered as well as the accessibility and availability of these healthcare facilities could hinder their utilization of these services. Also several factors such as lack of adequate services or lack of proper care by the health facilities available can expose the students to health conditions which can lead to illness outbreaks. These factors existing among the facilities in the University of

Benin could influence the students perception and also be an hindrance towards the utilization of healthcare services by the students.

This study therefore, seeks to examine the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State.

### **Research Questions**

This study seeks to provide answers to the following:

1. What are the perceptions of students in the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?
2. What are the factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?
3. What are the perceived ways of improving the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State. In the light of this, the specific objectives of the research include:

1. To know the perceptions of students in the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin.
2. To know the factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin.
3. To know the perceived ways of improving the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?

### **Significance of the Study**

At the completion of the study, it is intended that findings from the research on the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State will be of help to the University of Benin management, parents, lecturers, researchers, school and the government.

The findings will be of benefit to the school management as it will help them identify possible issues that could influence the non-utilization of school healthcare services as a result of factors affecting proper distribution of care. It will enlighten the lecturers on how some of these factors affecting the utilization of healthcare services can affect the educational process and the well being of the students in school and help them also to identify possible risk factors to health. The information from this research will also help researchers know how individual's perception and factors can influence the utilization of healthcare services and make it easier for them to quickly identify factors that could hinder the utilization of healthcare services and how it would impact the students in school. The study will also be of great benefit to researchers who intend to embark on research on similar topics as it will serve as a guide. The information from this research will enable the school parents to understand their children's perception and reluctance and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services. This study will assist schools, Federal Ministry of Education and the Federal Ministry of Health as the study will help the ministries to consider the possible factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services. It will enlighten them on the extent of the factors limiting

the utilization of health services. The information from this research will also help schools know the importance of the availability of healthcare services and how it aids the development and well-being of students in school.

### **Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

The scope of the study focuses on the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State and this study will be carried out using the University of Benin, with the students in the Ugbowo Campus as the target population. It can still be generalized since health is an important concept for all and it could also be useful for future comparative studies. The study is narrowed to the case study of University of Benin Students in Ugbowo Campus.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Perception:** The organization, identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the presented information or environment.

**Factors:** A circumstance, fact or influence that leads to a result.

**Influencing:** The capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behaviour of someone or something, or the effect itself.

**Utilization:** The action of making practical and effective use of something.

**Services:** Services involve an interaction to be realised between the service provider and the consumer.

**Students:** A person who is studying at a university or other place of higher education.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

It is the intention of the researcher in this chapter, to review the works of scholars and researchers, which are related to this topic. This will be done under the following topics.

- Concept of Health Care Services
- Utilization of Healthcare Services
- Perception Towards the Utilization of Healthcare Services
- The Factors Influencing the Utilization of Healthcare Services
- Socio-cultural Factors Influencing Utilization of Healthcare Services
- Improving the Utilization of Healthcare Services among Students
- Summary of Literature Reviewed

#### **Concept of Health Care Services**

Healthcare services consists of organizations, medical professionals, and ancillary healthcare workers who help individuals in need of medical attention. Patients, families, communities, and populations in need of medical services are served by health services. Healthcare services means delivering or providing adequate and essential care by administering, managing or monitoring air ambulance services, including without limitation, the sale, delivery, transportation, provision or administration of, people, health or healthcare items, goods or services but excluding search and rescue. In broad sense, health care services" refers to any services that are rendered in relation to either the diagnosis, prevention, or treatment of any disease or impairment

affecting humans, or the evaluation or management of human health by a health care professional or by any individual working under their supervision.

All inpatient (acute-care diagnostic and therapeutic inpatient hospital services), outpatient (acute-care diagnostic and therapeutic outpatient services, including but not limited to ambulatory surgery and radiology services), and professional (medical services provided by physicians or other licensed medical professionals) services are considered healthcare services, to the extent that they are provided by the defendant and fall within the scope of services covered on an in-network basis as per an agreement between the insurer and the defendant. According to (Adeyemi, 2016), healthcare services which are made up of organizations, medical professionals, and ancillary healthcare workers help people in need of medical attention. They serve the medical needs of individuals which includes hospital, emergency, palliative, rehabilitative, long-term, diagnostic, primary, and home care. The main goals of these services are to provide patient-centered, high-quality, and accessible healthcare. To successfully provide health services, a wide range of providers and care models are required. Therefore, all services offered to safeguard and enhance health, avoid illness, treat patients as best as possible, prevent disabilities, offer medical and social rehabilitation to the disabled, and give people a qualified and long life are collectively referred to as health care services.

The concept of health services which had been generated by the biopsychosocial approach was structured into the concept of primary health care at the international conference held by the WHO in Alma-Ata in 1978.

The effective provision of contemporary health services to all individuals equally, at every stage, guaranteeing community and individual participation, adhering to regulations and standards, and employing appropriate technology is known as primary health care, or PHC. The minimum components of the healthcare services includes; public education, the encouragement of a healthy diet and food supply, the provision of clean water and sanitary facilities, family planning and other child care services, immunization, prevention and control of locally endemic diseases, treatment of common illnesses and injuries, and the provision of necessary medications which is referred to as minimum care. Andrew (2017) expressed that It was stated that an individual's social, economic, and physical environment was the foundation of their health, therefore the emphasis of healthcare services has been on providing health services to everyone in need, whether well or ill, with the assistance of various professional groups. These groups prioritized prevention and were focused on biological, mental, social, and economic disorders.

### **Perception towards the Utilization of Healthcare Services**

Living a productive life both socially and economically requires being in good health. According to Obiechina and Ekenedo (2013), a person's health is the most important aspect of their life since it greatly influences how well they function in society. In any society, being well ensures that people can move forward and have hope (Letty, 2016). This suggests that everyone has to work toward and maintain good health since it is a factor in determining one's success in life. In order to do this, it is imperative that health services should be

provided and effectively utilized. In order to do this, it is imperative that health services should be provided and effectively utilized.

However Utilization of these services remains dependent on the perception of individuals. According to Ricketts (2009), perception is the process of organizing, identifying, and interpreting sensory data in order to represent and comprehend the world around us or the information that is being presented. It is the ability to identify and make sense of sensory inputs. It also encompasses an individual's reaction to environmental information (Mallum & Haggai, 2004). Kuponiyi (2016) asserted that perception has a significant influence on health service utilization and enrollment. Similarly, Adams & Awunor (2014) demonstrated that the degree of healthcare service utilization is primarily determined by the perception of inadequate and poor quality health services. Umunna (2012) emphasized that health services consist of various crucial elements, including health assessment, health evaluation, health counseling, emergency medical attention for illnesses and injuries, remedial defect correction, ambulatory services, health screening, and the prevention and control of communicable diseases. These services include both preventive and curative services and also provide information, to the public, necessary to develop and maintain good health (Kuponiyi, 2016). These services are centered on making healthcare accessible, high quality and patient - centered.

According to Adams and Awunor (2014), effective use of healthcare services contributes to population health improvement. Health is largely determined by how much one uses healthcare services. Its importance in promoting and

preserving optimal health status is paramount. A fundamental primary healthcare concept, according to WHO (2011), is the use of healthcare services. However, studies have revealed that other socioeconomic factors may have an impact on access to and utilization of health services, so their mere existence does not ensure their use. Low use of medical facilities is frequently a sign of subpar care and unfriendly personnel (Kuponiyi, 2016). According to a study conducted among 360 mothers in a rural community in Plateau State, Nigeria, the main reasons why people don't visit health facilities are the high cost of drugs (29.0%), service fees (19.0%), ease of access to traditional healers (39.0%), and transportation challenges (30.0%) (Kuponiyi, 2016). A different cross-sectional survey investigating the use of primary healthcare (PHC) facilities in a rural Southwest Nigerian community revealed that 40.0% of those who had become ill in the six months prior sought treatment from a PHC facility, with the remaining respondents depending on self-medication (Adebayo & Asuzu, 2015).

Numerous experts in the fields of education and health have attested to the close relationship that exists between a student's academic success and health. That is, the student must be in good health in order for any meaningful learning to take place (Baltag, Pachyna, & Hall, 2015). There is a strong correlation between students' health and academic achievement (Ogbiji, 2011). Students who are in better health are able to think and perform more accurately, which leads to increased productivity and success. The health of Nigerian students, who make up a significant portion of the population, should therefore receive

careful attention. Universities is where students receive tertiary education which is the education received after the primary education and secondary education. Students who are in the tertiary institutions are young adults usually within the ages of 18 years and above. The university is a unique and powerful institution which serves to mould the behavior of students who attend such school, Positively in character and in learning. The lecturers and schools generally are academically prepared to organize developmental and appropriate learning experiences that can empower students to embrace safer and healthier lifestyles (Kuponiyi, 2016).

It is abundantly evident that a sizable segment of Nigerians are students. They make up a sizable section of the populace of the nation. It is impossible to overestimate the part these students play in the advancement of the country. They act as the cornerstone for the country's advancement in the areas of economic, political, technological, agricultural, and educational development (Ola, 2001). It is therefore necessary to protect, preserve, maintain and promote the health of these students by providing them with comprehensive health care services. One way of promoting health services in schools is the school health program, claims Kuponiyi (2016). The school receives counseling and advisory services from this program. In addition, it offers school health records, preentry medical screening, routine physicals, sick bays, first aid, and referral services.

Given the complexity of the numerous physiological and sociological health issues that young adults attending tertiary institutions frequently face, it is

imperative that students make effective use of available health services because health services play such a significant role in an individual's development and well-being, they are relevant to everyone. Therefore, it is imperative that no person be denied access to these services on the basis of their gender, race, religion, or other socioeconomic status. Through the school health program, health services have been offered and made available to students over time (Ogbiji, 2011). Through the promotion of the health of the students who effectively utilize these services, this has made a significant contribution to Nigeria's high standard of education.

However, the level of utilization of these services remains very low. This is because of how the students view the health services and their own health. As per Obiechina & Ekenedo (2013), students' low use of health services is attributed to their belief that they are well and do not require any assistance. Studies have demonstrated that, in contrast to their belief, students have a high morbidity burden. According to WHO (2011), infectious diseases, trauma and injuries, starvation, psychological issues, obesity, drug misuse, HIV, and violence are among the health issues that students must deal with. It is necessary to boost university students' use of health services in light of these health issues. This is imperative because a continued trend of low utilization could result in an uncontrollably high rate of morbidity, low productivity, and death.

One important factor that has emerged as a predictor of health service utilization is perception. Robert (2016) expressed that even though services are

available, patients may decide not to use them, so utilization is only partially a reflection of effective availability. People's perceptions of the services and their ability to pay for them influence their decision to use the available health services. People's opinions and assessments are frequently influenced by the evaluation of elements that their customs and culture value highly, such as politeness, responsiveness, attentiveness, and the perceived skill of the medical staff. People's opinions are shaped by their degree of contentment with the healthcare system and how they view the attitudes of healthcare professionals, which frequently influences their decision to return in the future. To guarantee successful interventions and the realization of universal health for all, it is essential that all stakeholders comprehend the public's perception of health services. This is essential for creating campaigns and promotional messages that are appropriate and targeted at driving demand for specific health interventions (Roberts, 2016).

Social psychologists contend that perception is shaped by factors such as "action-outcome expectancies" (belief that the suggested action will contribute to the expected outcome), "risk perception" (the degree to which one feels susceptible to a particular health risk), and "self-efficacy" (confidence in one's ability to take the necessary action). Others emphasized that these factors frequently result in precautionary motivation, which is the drive to maintain healthier behaviors and may even inspire the intention to do so (Andrew, 2014). It has also been suggested that the use of health care is influenced by supply-

side variables in addition to need-related ones, making the structures of the health care system crucial.

### **The Factors Influencing the Utilization of Healthcare Services**

Health care services refers to a broad range of services that include illness prevention, early disease detection, and community-based health problem management. These services are intended to address the community's health needs by utilizing existing medical facilities and health personnel performing their professional duties. Around the world, universities do have health centers that are supposed to give the local population access to quality medical care. For example, Oklahoma State University's university health service in the United States maintains that it has a responsibility to give students access to high-quality, reasonably priced healthcare. An assessment of Tanzanian students' use of health services in the Arusha region found that the majority of them benefited from and made use of contemporary health services, and that the population of students would probably benefit from improvements made to the current health system.

It has been observed that a number of factors, including waiting times, quality of care, distance from medical facilities, cost of healthcare, and religion, influence people's decision not to use medical facilities. Easy accessibility to the medical center, time spent waiting for treatment, the relationship between students and medical staff, and the availability of necessary drugs are among the factors influencing the utilization, according to a study conducted by Alakija (2017). Few studies have focused on patient satisfaction, and it's not

obvious if university health clinics are addressing the problem. Studies carried out in and around Nigeria over the years have demonstrated that a person's preference for a particular healthcare facility is influenced by a variety of predisposing factors as well as their own health-seeking behavior. For example, a study conducted in Sagamu, South-West Nigeria, found that the most popular types of health facilities were maternity homes, teaching hospitals, private hospitals, and patent medicine sellers, in that order. These reasons included competence, effective treatment, promptness, and quality of service (Abiodun & Olu-Abiodun, 2014). According to a related study carried out in Ilorin, North-Central Nigeria, the most favored healthcare facility was a private, for-profit facility. This preference was based on the availability of drugs and the promptness of service (Abodunrin et al., 2010).

According to a follow-up study done in South-Eastern Nigeria, patent medicine sellers were primarily used (Uzochukwu & Onwugekwe, 2004). However, Awoyemi, Obayelu, and Opaluwa (2011) have argued that waiting times, particularly in government-owned hospitals, have a significant influence on people's choice of healthcare facility utilization in the area. Tanimola & Owoyemi (2009) discovered that cost was a major determinant of people's behavior when seeking health care in Ayangba, North Central Nigeria. They added that these hospitals have lengthy wait lists, which slow down patient care and lead to healthcare providers becoming complacent from seeing so many patients every day. Chukwuani (2006), stressed that inadequate service quality and unfavorable staff attitudes are the main causes of the under-utilization of

healthcare facilities in developing nations. Furthermore, a significant issue that is endangering the nation's use of contemporary healthcare facilities is the rivalry between traditional medicine and practitioners and modern medicine and medical professionals. According to a survey carried out in Benin City, Edo State, South-South Nigeria in 2015, there were three signposts indicating traditional health facilities for every modern healthcare facility in the city (Awoyemi, Obayelu & Opaluwa, 2011). This implies that a considerable proportion of the population had seek care not only from hospitals and other modern medical facilities in the nation, but also from traditional medicine and spiritual homes.

The need for care, people's knowledge of their need for care, their desire to receive care, and their ability to access care all influence how much health care is used. Quality is a concept that exists independently of access and is linked to the attainment of positive outcomes related to utilization, not to the infrequency of health-care utilization or the challenges associated with getting care. Theoretically, there should be a strong correlation between the need for services, however defined, and the use of health care services. However, some services are needed and not obtained, and others are utilized but not clearly indicated, or are indicated only after other protocols are followed (Kale, 2013). The factors which influence the utilization of healthcare services includes;

## Need for Healthcare Services

The state of one's health and the requirement for medical services to preserve or enhance one's health are important factors that influence the use of health care. According to the World Health Organization, a person's physical environment, socioeconomic environment, and unique traits and behaviors all influence their health (WHO, 2017). Individual characteristics encompass an individual's biology and genetics, including inherited medical conditions and diseases. There are differences in the prevalence of those conditions based on factors such as employment status, race and ethnicity, age, and sex. Pollutants and other environmental health risks can have an impact on physical environments and health. Individual habits like smoking, lack of exercise and over feeding can also lead to health issues that need medical attention (ODPHP, 2017). The correlation between healthier populations and social determinants of health, including education, economic stability, community safety, and access to adequate housing and nutritious food, has been demonstrated in recent attention to these factors (ODPHP, 2017). An individual's need for medical services differs among other individuals in their health-care utilization by specific populations of interest. This includes poverty and its correlates and geographic area of residence, race and ethnicity, sex, age, language spoken, and disability status. However, need is usually the major influencing health-care utilization, but other factors clearly have an effect. One of those factors is the ability to access care including whether it is available, timely and convenient, and affordable (Figueroa et al., 2017).

## Access to Healthcare Services

Access to health care involves having timely use of health care services to achieve the best possible health outcome. Access entails entering the healthcare system, gaining entry to treatment facilities where patients can obtain necessary services, and locating providers who can meet patients' needs and with whom patients can establish a rapport based on trust and communication (AHRQ, 2010). Healthcare professionals emphasize that prompt access to care is critical because it may help patients and doctors prevent disease, manage acute episodes, or treat chronic conditions all of which may help prevent a condition's worsening or complications (NCHS, 2017). Access can be interpreted in a variety of ways, and it is frequently used to refer to elements or traits that impact a person's first interaction with or utilization of services. Predisposing factors, enabling factors, and the severity of the illness are all included in the health-care utilization framework that Anderson and Newman (2005) presented. More recently, Levesque et al. (2013) provided five dimensions of accessibility which includes; approachability, acceptability, availability and accommodation, affordability, and appropriateness in order to define access to health care. They viewed access as the chance to determine one's own health-care needs, to reach, acquire, or make use of health-care services, and to have those needs met.

Access is a continuum: even in cases where care is available, a number of factors may make it difficult for a patient to receive it. These include the availability of providers who accept Medicaid and other insurance plans, the

ease of scheduling an appointment with a particular provider, the patient's ability to pay for care even in cases where they are insured due to cost-sharing copayments and deductibles, and the challenge of arranging transportation to and from medical facilities (AHRQ, 2010). Below is a discussion of a few of those concerns.

#### Capacity and Predisposition to Utilize Services

If healthcare services are unavailable in the residential areas of individuals or if providers refuse to treat them due to insurance concerns or other reasons, people will not be able to access them. It has been determined that there is a shortage of specialty physicians, particularly mental health care providers, in rural areas (Meit et al., 2014). Even if services are offered, there may still be obstacles in the way of receiving care. One is insufficient transportation, which can be caused by an excessive travel time, a lack of public transportation and the lack of a car or other means of transportation, or an excessive cost of transportation. When there are no available appointment times or when the provider does not take insurance, the patient may be turned away. Language barriers may prevent providers from communicating with patients, or they may not have handicapped accessibility in their offices. Long wait times for appointments or to see doctors at their locations of service may also discourage people from using (MACPAC, 2016, NCHS, 2016).

#### Insurance and Ability to Pay for Services

The affordability of health insurance affects how often people use medical services. Financial barriers to care have been higher in Nigeria than it has been

over the years, especially for the uninsured and those with low incomes (Akinyemi, 2015). One significant factor contributing to health-care disparities has been found to be the absence of health insurance (Akinyemi, 2012). Individuals without insurance between the ages of 18 and 64 are more likely than those with Medicaid or private insurance to report having trouble paying for necessary medical care and prescription medications. They are also more likely than those with insurance to put off or forego getting them due to cost (KFF, 2016). Between 2004 and 2014, adults without insurance reported difficulties accessing prescription drugs and medical care 4-5 times more frequently than those with private insurance and 1.5–3.0 times more frequently than those with insurance.

The mere fact that an individual has an insurance does not guarantee that coverage is sufficient or free from onerous cost-sharing requirements such as premiums, copayments, and deductibles (Fang et al., 2016). According to surveys, underinsured individuals are those who claim to have insurance but are concerned about their medical bills, who are paying their premiums over time, or who have not sought certain kinds of medical care due to cost.

### **Socio-cultural Factors Influencing Utilization of Healthcare Services**

Good health is essential to socio-economic development as it enables people to participate in economic, social and political development. Good health is a vital indicator of quality of life and a major contributor to human capital. Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being of an individual not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 2000). The overriding

importance of an effective health care delivery system is understood as it represents one of the drivers of development sound Health of the citizenry ensures greater human development. The health of a nation's population is a good indicator of its wealth. The state of people's health can be considered as one element of a complex system that includes factors related to adaptability and optimal use of one's immediate surroundings. Various agencies and specialists are known to offer healthcare services at varying levels. Healthcare services are managed by the federal, state, and local governments in Nigeria. Organizations and private citizens who founded and own private medical services also provide support for these healthcare services. Lawal (2009) argues that sociocultural factors may have a role in the underutilization of health care services in rural areas. There are many different and extensive factors influencing health care. It is crucial to have access to high-quality healthcare that is readily available. Lawal (2009) asserted that in order to provide appropriate health care services, socio-cultural factors must be taken into account. Despite efforts to guarantee that health care services are available, utilization appears to be lacking in significant improvements. Sociocultural elements like cultural beliefs can be linked to this including employment rate, marital status, level of education, and religious affiliations.

Ideally, utilization of health-care services reflects a need for care, but that is not the case, for several reasons. Many sociocultural factors affect health-care utilization independently of need and are reflected in differences, some of which are remediable, among population groups. Some of these factors are

related to biologic or environmental differences among groups, such as disproportionate residence in polluted environments, access to healthful food and adequate housing, and education associated with effective use of health care. Others are related to differences in access, such as health insurance coverage or income needed to obtain services, ease of obtaining services, and discriminatory practices of providers.

### Race and Ethnicity

Inequalities based on race and ethnicity exist in many facets of the Nigerian society. There may be a disproportionate number of individuals in the country who live in lower socioeconomic classes, attend worse schools, and work in lower-paying occupations (Eze, 2012). Residential segregation based on race is a major way that racism creates and maintains social disadvantage. Adults who are not well to do are more likely to reside in underprivileged areas and attend underfunded schools, which has a negative impact on their level of education (Braveman, 2014). These variables may cause certain racial and ethnic minorities to have greater mortality rates than individuals who are well to do, as well as higher rates of infectious diseases, chronic and incapacitating illnesses. Finding a "usual source" of medical care is more difficult for minorities than for the majority population. People who are not well off frequently experience more severe and quicker-progressing illnesses, higher levels of comorbidity and impairment over the course of their lives, and a higher death rate than people who can pay for their medical care.

In some societies, women are not expected to seek medical care without prior permission from their husbands; violation of this may attract sanction of many forms, at times divorce. This indeed, affect health care services utilization thereby undermines socio-economic development of the region. Yar'zever and Sa'id (2013) observed that, women from rich households seek antenatal care more than those from poor households, because of their economic stance and access to information. This shows the influence of social status and antenatal seeking behaviour, because women who cannot have access to free government health facilities or transportation fee to where the services are offered deprived opportunity to utilize health care services. Therefore, social status invariably influences health care services utilization. Even though, even, if women are freely allowed to patronize health care facilities in the northern region, most of the hospitals are not built close to their place of residence which constraint their access to the services.

## Gender

One important factor influencing the use of health care services is gender. This is so because the use of healthcare services is influenced by gender roles and attitudes. More women than men use public health services. Women are typically perceived as having poor health and are inherently seen as being weak, dependent, and unprepared. Their biological makeup is predisposed to health-seeking behavior; they constantly have some sort of illness or health issue.

In general, women use healthcare services at a higher rate than men. While it was previously believed that women sought medical attention

primarily for reproductive health during their child bearing years, many women sought care for conditions like osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease during and after menopause (Owens, 2008). Research has indicated that although men are generally more likely to be obese and have cardiovascular issues, women make more primary care visits and receive more diagnostic, screening, diet and nutrition counseling, and sexual health care than men (Salganicoff et al., 2014). Because of this, women have a greater need for health care services than men do, and they are also more inclined to seek those services even though the majority of them detest taking prescription drugs especially tablets that they receive from hospital doctors. In certain countries, however, the status of women often influences and drives how they use healthcare services. Compared to men, women use healthcare services more frequently, according to a Canadian study. This illustrates how, even in developed societies, gender plays a role in determining healthcare utilization. However, just like in northern Nigeria, a woman in Pakistan cannot go to a nearby village by herself to get medical attention without a mother-in-law, husband, or other family member accompanying her (Olabisi, 2014). Dansabo (2002) presented a related argument, revealing that in northern Nigeria, particularly in rural areas where cultural heritage is highly valued and preserved, a woman is required to get her husband's permission before leaving the house. As a result, obtaining permission to visit the clinic takes time.

## Spoken Language

Language barriers and low or no proficiency in speaking, reading, or understanding English are common among Nigerians who belong to racial and ethnic minorities. In the context of healthcare, these obstacles may pose significant difficulties for both patients and healthcare professionals. Language barriers negatively impact health status, quality of care, and access to care for populations especially the northerners. There may be several negative consequences to a patient's medical care if they are unable to communicate with their healthcare provider in their native tongue. For instance, low patient satisfaction, poor compliance, and under use of services can result from a patient's incapacity to comprehend a provider's diagnosis or treatment plan (Timmins, 2012). When Flores (2006) looked at language barriers to health care in the US, she found that 22.3 million Americans had low English proficiency, meaning they speak the language less than "very well," and that 49.6 million Americans speak a language other than English at home.

Patients who experience language barriers are more likely to not follow prescription drug regimens, receive fewer preventive services, and have a lower likelihood of having a regular source of medical care than others. Language barriers increase the likelihood that psychiatric patients will be diagnosed with a severe psycho pathologic condition compared to other patients, but they also increase the likelihood that they will leave the hospital against medical advice. Such patients are less likely than others to return for followup appointments

after visits and they have higher rates of hospitalization and drug complications (Flores, 2006).

### Income and Poverty

There is a strong positive correlation between income and risk factors for chronic disease. Individuals with lower family incomes are more likely to have four or more common chronic conditions, as well as higher rates of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, or hypertension (NCHS, 2017). Compared to those from wealthier households, those from families with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty line are more likely to smoke and be obese. According to a series of questions about their perceived mental health, adults who live in poverty are also more likely to self-report experiencing serious psychologic distress. Access to material goods and services, including health care services, is made possible by economic resources, such as income and wealth. Individuals who made less than 200 percent of the federal poverty regardless of race or ethnicity, were more likely than those with higher family incomes to put off or forego seeking necessary medical care due to financial constraints (NCHS, 2012).

### Geography

Numerous studies have demonstrated the relationship between the degree of urbanization and health-care utilization, including the relationship between socio demographic traits of the population and risk factors, need, and access to care. The demographic, environmental, economic, and social features of urbanized and less urbanized communities vary, and these differences are

correlated with the types and severity of health issues that these communities face. For instance, residents of more rural counties typically reside further from health care resources, while those in more urban counties typically have a higher per capita number of healthcare providers. The majority of studies have contrasted the overall level of urbanization, mostly between metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. However, a few studies have compared utilization by more specific urbanization groupings, including two categories of non-metropolitan areas, namely large rural areas that contain very small population centers and rural areas that contain small population centers; and metropolitan geographic areas, inner cities of large metropolitan areas, suburban fringes, and small metropolitan areas (Ingram and Franco, 2014). Those studies show some differences by magnitude of urbanization, but other differences are more pronounced between suburban fringe areas of cities (which tend to have higher average income) and other areas.

### **Improving the Utilization of Healthcare Services among Students**

Improving the utilization of healthcare services among students is an essential aspect of modern healthcare that helps to ensure that students receive the right care at the right time, in the school community, and at the right cost. By keeping the health records of the students, coordinating care across different providers and settings, and managing healthcare costs, the utilization of healthcare services among students can be improved, ensuring that students receive appropriate and necessary care while also promoting better patient outcomes and improving the sustainability of the school healthcare system.

Engagement of students in the healthcare service utilization is critical for is essential for healthcare utilization, and by using patient-centered communication, providing education, utilizing patient portals, offering incentives, using technology, and collaborating with patients, healthcare providers can encourage students to take an active role in their own care, leading to better outcomes, increased satisfaction, and lower healthcare costs. One essential element of healthcare utilization is patient engagement. Involving students in their own care can result in reduced medical expenses, better results, and higher patient satisfaction. Utilization of healthcare services among students can be improved in the following ways:

1. Use of Patient Centered Communication; One important tactic for getting students involved in their own care is patient-centered communication. This method places a strong emphasis on cooperation, empathy, and active listening between the students and the healthcare professional. Student patients are more likely to take an active role in their own care when they perceive that their doctors are paying attention to their worries and collaborating with them to create a plan of care.

2. Provision of Health Education; Another way of improving the utilization of healthcare services by students is health education. Giving patients knowledge about their ailments, available therapies, and self-care techniques can encourage them to actively participate in their own health management by utilizing healthcare services. There are many different ways to health educate students, including through books, films, and internet resources.

3. Use of Patient Portals; Students can interact with their healthcare providers and access their health information via online platforms called patient portals. Test results can be shared, appointments can be made, and care-related queries can be asked via portals. Patient portals, which facilitate easy access to information and communication with providers, can be a practical and efficient means of empowering patients to take an active role in their own care.

Other ways of improving the utilization of healthcare services among students include the following: use of cultural lay health workers/interpreters, peer health educators, family/community interventions to bridge language and cultural gaps, decrease of cultural health barriers such as fear of surgery and preference of female patients for female physicians to conduct health examination with similar preferences for males or improvement of health knowledge for chronic disease conditions and preventive health strategies by ethnic specific videos or health fairs, use of after hours access, community based and “one stop” integrated services (e.g., medical, mental health, social services), decrease of financial and medical coverage barriers and logistical barriers such as transportation, significant improvements in health education.

### **Summary of Reviewed Literature**

Good health outcomes result from early detection and prevention of health problems as well as from receiving high-quality medical care when necessary by individuals utilizing healthcare services. Thus, it is pertinent for students to get recommended preventive health care services by utilizing healthcare services. Therefore, the goal of Healthy People 2030 is to “help people get

recommended preventive health care services. Disease prevention has become a key consideration for public health policymakers around the world. In an effort to lessen the burden of disease and related risk factors, health programs are promoted with a greater emphasis on disease prevention and health promotion. The trend of global health progress is moving from disease treatment to disease prevention and health management, as well as from passive to active and predictive care.

Research has shown that unhealthy lifestyles account for 60% of disease cases with students in universities not being left out, and that these disease-related unhealthy lifestyles are actually preventable and controllable if students utilize healthcare services. Clinical prevention strategies include controlling the disease to slow or stop its progression (tertiary prevention), detecting and treating disease stages early (secondary prevention), and intervening before the disease occurs (primary prevention). When paired with lifestyle modifications, these interventions can significantly lower the prevalence of chronic diseases, as well as the death and disability they cause. The theory of health economics states that investing in health capital, such as using preventive care services, can effectively improve and maintain personal health, lower the utilization or expenditure of medical care, encourage a healthier lifestyle, identify illness earlier, and lessen the need for an individual to receive inpatient medical care. The use of healthcare services, particularly by students, is extremely low; even when services are provided for free, very few students take advantage of the advised medical care. Less than 7% of adults in Nigeria use health care services,

making it an even lower usage rate. In Taiwan, roughly 30% of adults used healthcare services on a yearly average in 2018.

The social cultural factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services (environmental factors, health-related behaviors, and socioeconomic factors) and health insurance play a major role in changes in the utilization of healthcare services by students. Even after removing the related structural and financial barriers, there are still disparities in the use of healthcare services among students who have health insurance coverage. Given that health insurance and social determinants of health are no longer adequate to account for the low use of preventive care services, some researchers have turned their attention to the question of equal access to health care services as well as demand factors.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHOD OF THE STUDY**

This chapter focuses on the research methodology used for this study. The following sub-topics are discussed in this Chapter.

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Administration
- Method of Data Analysis

#### **Research Design**

This study utilized a descriptive survey research design. According to Omorogiuwa (2019), a descriptive survey research design aims at collecting data on a population of study and using such data to explain the characteristic features and facts about the population. This design is considered most suitable for this study as it allows the researcher to collect data from the respondents on their opinions concerning the phenomenon under study as it is in their natural setting.

#### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprises of all the students in University of Benin. The institution has a total of fifteen (15) faculties with an estimated population

of 47,468 students as of the 2022/2023 academic session (Students Affairs Division, University of Benin, 2023).

### **Sampling and Sampling Technique**

The simple random sampling technique was used to select 8 faculties from the total number of faculties in the University of Benin. 30 respondents will be selected from each faculties making a total of 240 respondents representing 10% of the population which was used for this study.

<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Education	30	12.5%
Engineering	30	12.5%
Arts	30	12.5%
Social Sciences	30	12.5%
Basic Medical Sciences	30	12.5%
Life Sciences	30	12.5%
Physical Sciences	30	12.5%
Agriculture	30	12.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Research Instrument**

A self structured questionnaire was used for the study. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, section A and B. Section A will contain questions soliciting information relating to the respondent's demographic data, while section B contained questions drawn from the research questions to solicit information relating to the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State.

### **Validity of the Instrument**

The instrument was validated by my supervisor and two other experts in the Department of Health, Safety and Environmental Education. Their corrections and suggestions will be used to prepare the final copy of the instrument.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

The reliability of the instrument was established using test-retest method of estimating reliability. This involved giving copies of the instrument to 20 persons outside the population of the study. After a time lapse of two weeks, the same instrument was administered to the same respondents. Data generated from the two administrations were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation. A correlation coefficient of 0.780 was observed, showing that the instrument is reliable.

### **Method of Data Administration**

The instrument was administered directly to the respondents by the researcher with the help of three trained research assistants. The researcher and the research assistants visited the faculties and administered the instruments to

undergraduate students who were available in their faculties, and were willing and ready to participate in the study. Direct administration of the instrument allowed the researcher to be on ground to explain any grey areas to the respondents.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The data was analyzed using frequency count and simple percentage.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF**  
**FINDINGS**

This chapter deals with the presentation of results and discussion of findings. The research questions were analysed. The data obtained were carefully examined and analysed to provide answers to the research questions raised to guide the study. The number of responses in the items were counted and the corresponding percentages calculated. Furthermore, two hundred and forty (240) questionnaires were used to sample the respondents opinions. The respondents were drawn from 240 students from the following faculties in the University of Benin; Education, Engineering, Arts, Social Sciences, Basic Medical Sciences, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences and Agriculture.

**Analysis Of Research Questions**

**Question 1: What are the perceptions of students in the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?**

Table 1: Respondents perceptions of the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin.

S/N	ITEM	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	TOTAL (%)
1	I have doubts about the medical equipment available in the healthcare facilities	196 (81.7%)		44 (18.3%)		100% (240)
2	The doctors in the health center are unpleasant and unfriendly	163 (67.9%)		77 (32.1%)		100% (240)
3	The staffs in the health centers are inadequate	201		32		100%

		(83.8%)	(16.2%)	(240)
4	The personnel in the medical facilities lacks competence	115 (47.9%)	125 (52.1%)	100% (240)
5	I am scared to go to the health facilities due to stories about the negligence of the doctors and nurses	198 (82.5%)	42 (17.5%)	100% (240)

Data from table 1, on the respondents perceptions of the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin, showed that majority of the students 81.7% agreed to the statement “I have doubts about the medical equipment available in the healthcare facilities”.

Majority of the respondents, 67.9% agreed to the statement “The doctors in the health center are unpleasant and unfriendly”.

Also, majority of the respondents, 83.8% agreed to the statement “The staffs in the health centers are inadequate”.

Majority of the respondents, 52.1% disagreed to the statement “The personnel in the medical facilities lacks competence”.

Majority of the respondents, 82.5% agreed to the statement “I am scared to go to the health facilities due to stories about the negligence of the doctors and nurses”.

From the table above, it can be inferred that the perceptions of the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin includes; doubts about the equipment available in the healthcare facilities, doctors being

unpleasant and unfriendly, inadequate staffs in the health centers and the scare of going to the health care centers due to the stories heard about the negligence of the doctors and nurses.

**Question 2: What are the factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?**

Table 2: Respondents view on the factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin.

S/N	ITEM	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	TOTAL (%)
6	The doctors are not always available	184 (76.7%)		56 (23.3%)		100% (240)
7	The cue at the health center is always lengthy	173 (72.1%)		67 (27.9%)		100% (240)
8	Poor quality of treatment received from previous visits	164 (68.3%)		76 (31.7%)		100% (240)
9	Lack of drugs	206 (85.8%)		34 (14.2%)		100% (240)
10	Unavailability of means of transportation	43 (17.9%)		197 (82.1%)		100% (240)

Data from table 2, showed the respondents view on the factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin. Majority of the students 76.7% agreed to the statement “The doctors are not always available”.

Majority of the respondents, 72.1% agreed to the statement “The cue at the health center is always lengthy”.

Also, majority of the respondents, 68.3% agreed to the statement “Poor quality of treatment received from previous visits”.

Majority of the respondents, 85.8% agreed to “Lack of drugs”.

Majority of the respondents, 82.1% disagreed to “Unavailability of means of transportation”

From the table above, it can be inferred that certain factors influence the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin. These factors includes; the availability of the doctors, lengthy cue at the health center, poor quality of treatment received from previous visits and lack of drugs.

**Question 3: What are the perceived ways of improving the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?**

Table 3: Respondents view on the perceived ways of improving the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin.

S/N	ITEM	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	TOTAL (%)
11	Adequate provision of healthcare personnels should be provided to reduce the cue at the health facilities	208 (86.7%)		32 (13.3%)		100% (240)
12	Drugs should be provided for easy reach to reduce the reluctance in going to the pharmacy to buy drugs after being prescribed at the health facility	234 (97.5%)		6 (2.5%)		100% (240)

13	The school healthcare providers should be friendly	235 (97.9%)	5 (2.1%)	100% (240)
14	Medical appointments should be scheduled for students	174 (72.5%)	34 (27.5%)	100% (240)
15	Students should be guided properly in order to see the need to take control and management of their health	189 (78.7%)	51 (21.3%)	100% (240)

Data from table 3, showed the respondents view on the perceived ways of improving the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin. Majority of the students 86.7% agreed to the statement “Adequate provision of healthcare personnels should be provided to reduce the cue at the health facilities”.

Majority of the respondents, 97.5% agreed to the statement “Drugs should be provided for easy reach to reduce the reluctance in going to the pharmacy to buy drugs after being prescribed at the health facility”.

Also, majority of the respondents, 97.9% agreed to the statement “The school healthcare providers should be friendly”.

Majority of the respondents, 72.5% agreed to the statement “Medical appointments should be scheduled for students”.

Majority of the respondents, 78.7% agreed to the statement “Students should be guided properly in order to see the need to take control and management of their health”

From the table above, it can be inferred that the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin can be improved by adequate provision of healthcare personnels provided to reduce the cue at the health facilities, availability of drugs provided for easy reach to reduce the reluctance in going to the pharmacy to buy drugs after being prescribed at the health facility, school healthcare providers should be friendly, medical appointments should be scheduled for students and students should be guided properly in order to see the need to take control and management of their health.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This study was conducted to examine the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State. The findings of this study are presented below:

Students have perceptions towards healthcare services that are available and provided for them in the University of Benin and these perceptions influence their utilization of the services made available to cater for their health needs. The perceptions among students about these healthcare services includes; doubts about the equipment available in the healthcare facilities, doctors being unpleasant and unfriendly, inadequate staffs in the health centers and the scare of going to the health care centers due to the stories heard about the negligence of the doctors and nurses. According to (Kuponiyi, 2016), the low use of medical facilities is frequently a sign of subpar care and unfriendly personnel. Also, according to Ekenedo (2013), the unavailability of healthcare providers at

their duty posts can influence the health seeking behaviour of individuals as well as the utilization of health care services.

Furthermore, findings from this study also revealed the factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin. Under this construct, the findings revealed that lengthy cue at the health center influences the utilization of healthcare services among students which is in line with a study that was carried out by Alakija (2017) on the factors influencing the utilization of health care services which he asserted that the long wait at medical facilities can influence the utilization of health care services among individuals. Also it was revealed that poor quality of treatment from previous visits, lack of drugs and doctors not being available can influence the utilization of healthcare services among individuals. This corroborates Alakija (2017) view that easy accessibility to the medical center, time spent waiting for treatment, the relationship between students and medical staff, and the availability of necessary drugs influences the utilization of health care services. Findings from this study, further revealed that the utilization of healthcare services can be improved among students in the University of Benin. This can be done by adequate provision of healthcare personnels provided to reduce the cue at the health facilities, availability of drugs provided for easy reach to reduce the reluctance in going to the pharmacy to buy drugs after being prescribed at the health facility, school healthcare providers should be friendly, medical appointments should be scheduled for students and students should be

guided properly in order to see the need to take control and management of their health.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter has to do with the summary of this study, which was embarked upon to examine the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State. The conclusion drawn from this research and recommendations are made based on the findings.

#### **Summary**

This study employed a descriptive survey in examining the examine the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State. The purpose of the study was to to know the perceptions of students in the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin, to know the factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin and to know the perceived ways of improving the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin. The study was focused on the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State. The design employed for the study was the descriptive survey, while the research instrument utilized for the study was the questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics by means of simple frequency and percentage. The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- What are the perceptions of students in the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?

- What are the factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?
- What are the perceived ways of improving the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin?

## **Findings**

Findings from this study revealed that;

- Students have perceptions that influences the utilization of the services made available to cater for their health needs. The perceptions among students about these healthcare services includes; doubts about the equipment available in the healthcare facilities, doctors being unpleasant and unfriendly, inadequate staffs in the health centers and the scare of going to the health care centers due to the stories heard about the negligence of the doctors and nurses.
- Various factors influences the utilization of the healthcare services available for the students which includes; lengthy cue at the health center, poor quality of treatment from previous visits, lack of drugs and the unavailability of doctors.
- The utilization of healthcare services can be improved among students in the University of Benin. This can be done by adequate provision of healthcare personnels provided to reduce the cue at the health facilities, availability of drugs provided for easy reach to reduce the reluctance in going to the pharmacy to buy drugs after being prescribed at the health

facility, school healthcare providers being friendly, medical appointments being scheduled for students and students.

## **Conclusion**

Students hold varieties of views and have perceptions which influences the utilization of health care services provided to cater for their health needs. Frequent times, they become reluctant to visit the health care facilities when they fall ill and rather decide to self medicate, which can result to medical or severe health complications that could deter them and also result to them keeping up with their academics or being healthy to face their academics and school work. The perceptions among them includes; doctors being unpleasant and unfriendly, inadequate staffs in the health centers and the scare of going to the health care centers due to the stories heard about the negligence of the doctors and nurses. Also certain factors influences their utilization of the health care services provided. These factors having a way or resulting to perceptions which can spread among the populace and lead to the low utilization of healthcare services. These factors includes; availability of the doctors, lengthy cue at the health center, poor quality of treatment received from previous visits and lack of drugs. The perceptions among students can be reduced with health care services directors in the University of Benin healthcare center as well as the referral services which includes University of Benin Teaching Hospital prioritizing students health needs and their well being.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Adequate provision of healthcare personnels should be provided to reduce the cue at the health facilities.
2. Drugs should be provided for easy reach to reduce the reluctance in going to the pharmacy to buy drugs after being prescribed at the health facility.
3. The school healthcare providers should be friendly.
4. Medical appointments should be scheduled for students in order to cater and attend to students properly
5. Students should be guided properly in order to see the need to take control and management of their health.

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## **APPENDIX I**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**THE PERCEPTION AND FACTORS INFLUENCING THE**  
**UTILIZATION OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES AMONG STUDENTS**  
**OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, EDO STATE**

Dear respondents,

This is designed to examine the perception and factors influencing the utilization of healthcare Services among students of the University of Benin, Edo State. This research work is purely for academic purpose and will be treated as confidential. You are therefore required to kindly and truthfully respond by providing answers to the questions below.

Thank you.

**OMAGE Comfort**  
**Researcher**

**Section A**

**Instruction:** please tick (✓) as appropriate.

**Demographic background.**

**Gender:** Male ( ) Female ( )

**Religion:** Christianity ( ) Islam ( ) Others ( )

**Age:** less than 20 years ( ) 20 – 25 years ( ) Above 25 years ( )

**Section B**

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
<b>What are the perceptions of students in the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin</b>					
1	I have doubts about the medical equipment available in the healthcare facilities				
2	The doctors in the health center are unpleasant and unfriendly				
3	The staffs in the health centers are inadequate				
4	The personnel in the medical facilities lacks competence				
5	I am scared to go to the health facilities due to stories about the negligence of the doctors and nurses				
<b>What are the factors influencing the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin</b>					
6	The doctors are not always available				
7	The cue at the health center is always lengthy				
8	Poor quality of treatment received from previous visits				
9	Lack of drugs				
10	Unavailability of means of transportation				
<b>What are the perceived ways of improving the utilization of healthcare services among students of the University of Benin</b>					
11	Adequate provision of healthcare personnels should be provided to reduce the cue at the health facilities				
12	Drugs should be provided for easy reach to reduce the reluctance in going to the pharmacy to buy drugs after being prescribed at the health facility				
13	The school healthcare providers should be friendly				
14	Medical appointments should be scheduled for students				
15	Students should be guided properly in order to see the need to take control and management of their health				

Thank You

**Reliability**

**APPENDIX II**

## Scale; ALL VARIABLES

### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	20	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	20	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha <sup>a</sup>	No of items
.780	15