



Digital Health Literacy Among Senegalese Adolescents and Its Influence on Healthcare Utilization in Sierra Leone: An Intervention Study

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Abstract

Digital health literacy (DHL) is a critical component in healthcare utilization among adolescents globally. However, research on DHL's impact on healthcare-seeking behaviors has been limited, particularly for Senegalese and Sierra Leonean populations. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including quantitative surveys with a sample size of 500 Senegalese adolescents. Qualitative interviews were conducted with 20 healthcare providers to gain deeper insights into the barriers and facilitators of digital health literacy in the region. The findings indicate that approximately 60% of participants had moderate DHL, which was significantly associated with increased healthcare utilization ($p < 0.05$). This study highlights the importance of enhancing DHL among Senegalese adolescents to improve their access to healthcare. Health educators and policymakers should prioritise digital literacy programmes targeting adolescents in Sierra Leone to bridge health information gaps. Senegal, Sierra Leone, Adolescents, Digital Health Literacy, Healthcare Utilization Treatment effect was estimated with $\text{text}\{ \text{logit} \}(\pi) = \beta_0 + \beta^{-1} p X_i$, and uncertainty reported using confidence-interval based inference.

Keywords: Digital Health Literacy, Sub-Saharan Africa, Intervention Study, Mobile Technology, Health Utilization Studies

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