

Research Methods in Health Promotion
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Week 01
Lecture 01: Basics of Health Promotion

Hello and welcome to this course on Research Methods in Health Promotion. You know in research methods in health promotion we'll be mostly discussing regarding the research methods that we employ regularly in health promotion research. Now in health research there are different areas there are mostly I mean we are accustomed with the so called typical disease related research. However in health promotion research will be focusing on promoting health. So, the discussions that we will be having regarding this topic over the next 12 weeks will mostly focus on how the research concepts, the steps of research and the data analysis and everything can focus on promoting health, the basic term health promotion. In the first lecture of this course we will be focusing on basics of health promotion right.

So, let us start discussion. Now in this particular lecture we will be focusing on the concept of health and its determinants then we will be coming on to what is actually health promotion, we will be having a bit of definition and the essence of health promotion the concept of it everything. Then we will focus on health promotion and determinants of health. So, we will gradually link health promotion to the determinants of health.

And finally, in this lecture we will be discussing the scope of health promotion because this is needed for you to understand why we actually need to perform the health promotion research. Now what is health? I believe most of you or at least many of you are very much aware of the WHO definition of health. Now, there are certain criticisms, but this is basically a starting point in every discussion that will be having in health promotion. So, what does it say? It says that health is a state of complete physical mental and social well being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity. We add a bit like to lead a socially and economically productive life.

Remember the physical mental and social we'll be coming on to these issues later on in this lecture as well because they are the perhaps the core determinants as has been defined by the WHO. Now it is not the only definition that will be discussing or perhaps it is not the only definition that justifies the concept of health promotion. In order to understand the concept of health promotion we must understand the other definition of health that is called the biomedical definition where it says health is

merely the absence of any disease or disability. So, health is basically the opposite of any disease or disability. Now as you can understand this biomedical definition is bit narrower in its scope, but the WHO definition it is you know it is a broader aspect.

The problem over here although is the WHO definition it is quite difficult to measure health according to this definition, but in terms of biomedical definition you can easily measure health how many people are having disease, how many people are not having disease, how many people are having any disability and how many of them are not having any disability. So, the measurements are quite easier, but still in a holistic way we accept the WHO definition because it helps us in unlocking different determinants and different paths towards promoting an individual's health and also promoting the health of the community. This brings us to this next issue that is the determinants of health. So, as we have already mentioned that those are the three the this physical, mental and social well being the physical, mental and social these are the three core areas of health as well as WHO definition. So, the determinants of health these are the basic three determinants of health that helps us in promoting health or mitigating the disease right.

So, basically what are the determinants as I have mentioned here determinants are the factors which decisively affect the nature or outcome of something. So, here this something means the outcome related to health because we are discussing determinants of health. Now the common understanding is that the health of an individual or health of a particular community it is mostly affected by the available health services. But if we go through the different definitions of health we will easily understand that it is not only the health care services yes the health care services they are an important aspect to define or to determine the status of health, but they are not the only factor. There are a number of other factors that influence the health status of the individuals.

Now all of these factors are considered determinants of health together ok. Now consider this third bullet point it says the context in which an individual lives is of great importance for both his or her health status and the quality of life. Why I have specifically mentioned this because when we are discussing regarding determinant of health remember it is not only about being healthy or unhealthy a more broader aspect of health is the quality of life it is not only being healthy ok I am free from any disease traditionally I can consider myself as healthy. But do I consider that my quality of life is of is of good standard that is another issue, but it is also intricately related to the status of health and in fact, is part of health that is why we consider the WHO definition as a more broader and holistic aspect. So, the determinants of health they not only determine the health status of an individual they also

determine the quality of life even if the person is healthy even if the person is not healthy either way the quality of life is determined by these determinants of health.

These are the three major determinants that basically the WHO definition says the first one is social and economic environment. Environment means it is the basic milieu where we or the interacting aspects for example, here the interacting aspects if we consider our self as human being we if we are dealing with human health then we are living in an environment which is which is you know it is a trees it is the animals who are surrounding us. In short where we are living in. So, the social and economic environment it means the social and particularly the economic aspect of the environment and it obviously, includes the culture and tradition of the community. So, in a way when we are discussing the social and economic the term themselves you know they say that the environment is mostly focusing on the community or the social aspect ok.

The physical environment it is what we were mentioning the water the availability of you know proper ventilation in a room like this those are the physical components of the environment and we also have the individual characteristics. Now, what are these individual characteristics? I have mentioned a few like genetics, gender, now behaviors and different practices you know like the you know consumption of healthy diet regular physical activity. These are all different behaviors as well as when the behaviors are you know implemented they become the practice. So, the different behaviors and practices they are all you know part of these determinants of health. I have given only a few examples, but the individual characteristics can be as many as you can imagine.

Now here we are going deep into the concept of health promotion ok. Why this is important because if we have to discuss regarding the research methods in health promotion we have to have a brief understanding about the health promotion per say. We also have another course that is mostly focused on the health promotion education interventions in that course also in the NPTEL platform we have focused on the detailed aspects of health promotion interventions and we have also briefed a bit about the this health promotion history of health promotion the definitions of health promotion. But in this course for understanding of the concepts of research in health promotion we will be dealing with the basic only the basic concepts of health promotion. We will not go into details of exactly what is health promotion what are the different aspects of interventions ok.

So, basically health promotion you know it started with the Ottawa charter for health promotion which was you know at the first international conference on health promotion we will be also discussing regarding the fourth international conference where we have the Jakarta declaration, but health promotion basically started with the Ottawa charter. In that conference basically the definition of health promotion came out and the definition later on was incorporated in the health promotion glossary by WHO. What it says is that health promotion is the process of enabling people just understand these terms enabling people to increase control over and to improve their health. So, firstly health promotion is regarding enabling the beneficiaries to do what to you know take the decisions or the different effective aspects of their health into their own consideration right see that mean that is why we have mentioned here that increase control over and to improve their health ok. Next it says it moves beyond a focus on individual behavior towards a wide range of social and environmental interventions.

So, understand this that health promotion means promoting health and it deals with different determinants of health will be coming to the relationship between health promotion and the determinants of health later on, but from the definition itself you can easily understand that when we discuss about health promotion it mostly focuses on the social and to some extent the environmental determinants. The determinants that we you know we often forget to talk about, but they are rather the important determinants that you know define not only the status of being healthy or unhealthy also the quality of life of any particular individual right. This statement I have put in here is to make you understand that the discipline of health promotion that means, promoting health is in fact, a paradigm shift because the classical concept of medicine or you know health it revolves around curing the diseases it used to revolve around that, but with the with the establishment of this discipline of health promotion we gradually started to understand that ok it is not really about treating the diseases we also can prevent the diseases. And you know the practices that we often consider as the healthy practices or the part of the health promotion practices they were prevalent in the communities since ages, but what health promotion does is health promotion understands those practices and it is facilitates those good practices and it prevents the bad practices from happening. And through this battery of events or this chain of events what health promotion does is it you know it in fact, prevents diseases from taking place even the health promotion practices or the health promotion you know interventions they prevent the diseases in the pre pathogenesis phase as well.

So, that is how health promotion is you know the discipline itself is a revolutionary thing because the concept of health the concept of medicine it is gradually changing and it is now moving towards preventing the particular illness from actually happening right. Now, as we were discussing in the previous slide that health promotion and the determinants of health they are linked because health

promotion is basically built on the different determinants of health. That is how we formulate the research questions or the research steps you know whatever we will be discussing later on they are in some way they are related to the determinants of health. The issue may be that a particular research question it may not address all the determinants of health at once, but it may address any particular determinant or a combination of determinants. So, to understand the research methods that are employed in health promotion we must understand that health promotion the term itself means that it is related to the different determinants of health ok.

Now the determinants as we were discussing in the previous slide they may be you know when we are discussing about health promotion they may be influencing the good behaviors for example, healthy lifestyles it may be preventing the bad behaviors for example, addiction. So, that is how health promotion and determinants they are linked health promotion basically influences the determinants to bring about a good change in the status of health. The health promotion the concept it operates through two distinct mechanisms the first one is called the health education and the next one is called the health protection. Now the health protection component it you know it again in turn operates through the healthy public policies and programs, but what does health education particularly do? It includes the educational efforts to change the behavior. In health promotion you will come across this particular term behavior change, behavior change interventions like this.

So, the basic idea here since we are going to prevent the disease is to bring about those changes that can actually prevent the disease from happening and though the major changes in that context they are the behavior change or changing a particular way of living or certain practices in short that is called the behavior. Now we will be discussing regarding these terms for example, the behavior or other important issues like constructs and everything later on, but health promotion through its health education strategies it focuses on changing the behavior. Example, I have mentioned here is the changing for example, addiction it is you know it is example of a lifestyle problem. So, through health education you can try to change the addiction pattern or you know even mitigate the addiction component in a particular individual. The health education component it in turns encourages the individuals to utilize the available health services to that particular individual and also to the community at large.

See here health education and health protection they are getting linked because health protection it operates through healthy public policies and programs. See addresses policies and regulations that are preventive in nature. For example, regulatory approach in per say preventing over speeding, regulatory

approach means you have certain laws. There may be certain programs that are there. So, these programs are there and they form the component of health protection, but see it is health education that encourages the beneficiaries or the individuals to take up these health protection measures or these health protection programs or these health protection services that are available to them.

In short since they are all linked and they form a unique continuum it is preferred that we combine both the efforts to you know actually bring about the change or bring the appropriate behavior change and that is how health promotion will ultimately lead to a positive effect on any of the determinant of health or even all of them. This is a summary chart that I have prepared what it depicts is how health promotion it actually brings upon good changes. See in the in the first in this first box determinants of health they are modulated by health promotion that we have discussed in the previous slide. Now what happens is we have two approaches for a for the first one is health education it improves individual knowledge and skills. The next one is advocacy for public health policies for supportive environment.

See in this slide it is a health protection part. So, health education and health protection. This finally, leads to the behavior change through improved health literacy and supportive environment. See improved health literacy means it is the direct effect of health education improving knowledge and skills it ultimately leads to improved health literacy in the people. And supportive environment means if you have a good advocacy in place for building healthy public policies or having good and accessible health programs they form the environment of you know they form the environment in terms of seeking health.

So, that is why we have mentioned supportive environment it is not only the physical or the so called biological environment that is surrounding us it is also the policy it is also the different programs that are there to help us attain a better state of health right. What happens is finally, improved health outcomes and reduction in health inequities. Now this component particular reduction in health inequities inequities as you can understand it means it is not classically equal equity does not necessarily mean it is equal, but it means that you have to provide the certain amount of impetus to individuals. So, that all of the individuals in a particular area or in a particular community reach a similar status that is called the concept of equity will not be detailing regarding this component, but please understand that improved health outcomes it invariably have a relationship with reduction in health inequities it is kind of a vice versa you know improved health outcomes means there will be a reduction in health inequity and if there is a reduction in health inequity it will ultimately lead to improved health outcomes and all of this is achieved by the different strategies under health promotion.

Now since we have now understood the different aspects of health promotion or what are the building blocks in health promotion we quickly move on to the scope of health promotion because it is the scope that will give us idea about the different research questions that we may formulate in health promotion.

I have listed out different scopes of health promotion, but please be advised that these are not the only scopes that there can be you can also think about different scopes and definitely you can discuss regarding these different scopes in our discussion forum as well. So, let us start discussing regarding the scopes the first one called the empowerment perhaps it is you know the most important scope of having a health promotion program or a health promotion initiative why because empowerment means what we have previously mentioned that we are putting the people in charge of their own health. So, empowerment means say I am empowered that means, I can take care of myself I can take care of my health and I can take actively the decisions that that are going to affect my health. So, that is how empowerment occurs and empowerment it obviously, is related to the socio economic development and the socio economic status of particular individual. For example, if in a particular community the key decision makers are only the males and the female candidates in the in the family they are not allowed to take any decision regarding health status or health expenditure or anything what happens there is because of this difference or the gender differential as we say the females they are not empowered because they are not put in charge of the decision making process or they are not given any scope to make a rational choice.

But health promotion means since as mentioned in the previous slide reduction in health inequities or in a broader way we are going to reduce the inequities. So, what happens is now those females who were previously deprived of all these rights they are given those rights and they can now take decision regarding their own health for example, the simple example is contraceptive practices. So, that is how empowerment occurs right and obviously, as you can understand since there are different behavioral social economic context involved in empowering a particular individual or empowering a particular community it can only be achieved through health promotion and this is not simply curing a disease or something like that it is rather empowering an individual to prevent certain things from occurring right. Next what I mentioned is it carries it carries out need based policy organizational economic regulatory and environmental interventions. So, these are in a way part of health promotion or health promotion and education interventions it can be many for example, you can have a policy intervention or a policy related something called a program it can have an organizational level of implementation economic intervention directly for example, if you are giving if giving certain some amount of money to the people and you are specifying that you are getting this kind of a money because you have for example, perform certain good practices.

If you consider the JSSK programs or the different programs under the umbrella of RMLCHA here the beneficiaries they are often given certain monetary incentives we call them incentives because they are given to the individuals because of certain good practice right. So, that is how economic interventions they can be a part of health promotion they can in fact, flourish certain areas in health promotion. It can be regulatory for example, passing some laws regarding speed limits regarding use of seat belts regarding use of helmet that can be regulatory aspect and also this can be certain environmental intervention. Now, environmental interventions they can be in terms of different health programs as we have mentioned in policy and organizational levels also it can be related certain physical environments for example, we are preventing certain companies to you know develop a factory that can emit certain harmful gases or materials in and that can be you know mixed with the river flow or groundwater or something like that. When we are preventing something like this or in fact, preventing the pollution it is also part of environmental intervention and all of this are basically part of health promotion right.

So, basically what we are I mean what I am telling here is whatever we do in terms of preventive health or preventive medicine or public health ultimately they culminate into this core concept of health promotion because all of these are promoting the health of the individual or the community and that is how these are all achieved. So, all these interventions may be you know implemented isolated way, but ultimately they are all linked and that is how health promotion actually occurs and that is the basic scope of health promotion the integration and the ultimate the cumulative benefit to the people or the individual. We must also remember that it is only through health promotion that we can focus on the shared responsibility and by means of shared responsibility we can focus on a greater collaboration of it ok. Greater collaboration means we are talking about collaborations among different sectors, different organizations and individuals nowadays we are talking about multidisciplinary, interdisciplinarity all of these are essential if we want to do something or if we are focusing on the research in health promotion right. Next a very important aspect is the participatory strategies and approaches because without participation you cannot achieve health promotion because it is only through the participation of the different stakeholders.

Please remember it is not only the participation of the beneficiaries, it is the participation of all the stakeholders that can make a particular health promotion initiative or an intervention successful ok. That is why I have mentioned that the opportunity for people to be actively engaged in the planning process more committed to initiating and upholding changes that they helped to design or adapt to their own purposes and circumstances. That means, if you are doing something on your own or by your own

hand you tend to remember all of it ok. So, that is how participation ultimately helps in bringing about good behavior change. There are certain ecological approaches as well the ecological approaches means it is the interaction between the individual and the ecosystem.

For example, the ecosystem means there are different parts the family what we have mentioned the family community culture, the traditions, the physical and the social environment or the different kinds of environment they are all part of the ecosystem. And when we are considering all of these as part of the health promotion intervention it is called the ecological approach ok. And as we have been mentioning for quite a few moments now that we need to apply the integrated strategies to that should be appropriated in the local context. And how do we understand it is appropriate in the local context by engaging the local stakeholders ok, that is why integration in this multidisciplinary these are all required. Now, finally, before we conclude in this lecture the basic essence that I am going to convey to you is the key value that drives health promotion.

What is the key value? I have the statement is taken from the preamble of the WHO constitution it says the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights I mentioned fundamental rights in red of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition. So, prevention of a disease and promotion of health these are all rights of a particular individual ok. And in a way if we consider these as rights it is easier to address the issues of equity and or the issues of empowerment and in a way will help us in you know preventing diseases. Because if a particular person is exposed to a certain disease agent it can be considered as the fundamental right of that human being for being protected against that disease is hampered. So, that is the key value that health promotion or promoting health of an individual it is the basic essence that every person must have an access to.

So far this is what we have discussed in this lecture. What you have mentioned is definition of health the WHO definition of health and also the biomedical definition we have mentioned the WHO definition is a broader although a bit rigid and you know it is sometimes a bit difficult to measure. But still WHO definition is the more holistic definition while the biomedical definition mostly focuses on the disease and the disability component when you do not have all of those then the biomedical definition considers you as healthy. But from a health promotion perspective what we must say is that the WHO definition offers us a more varied you know interface in understanding health. We have discussed about the determinants of health we have mentioned that the different determinants are there

although the major determinants that the WHO definition mentions is the physical, mental and the social determinants.

There may be many other determinants and also certain individual factors they can be the behavior or the behavior when it is implemented the practices regarding certain things. What health promotion does is health promotion alters those determinants in a good way so that a good or healthy practice is there right. And lastly we discussed regarding the strategies or how health promotion is basically operated we discussed about the health education component and also the health protection component. The health education component what it does? The health education component is the one that helps you know build the knowledge or the capacity of the beneficiaries in fact, of all the stakeholders that is obtained through educating them. And what is health protection? Protection is obtained through you know certain regulatory approaches or the policies like this, but they are all related we have discussed that the health education and the health protection they are related because it is because of the health education that the people are you know we will be motivated to take up the programs that are available or the services that are available, right.

So, in this lecture we have discussed till this much later we will be discussing a bit more about the basic concepts of the health promotion before we finally, delve directly into the research areas of health promotion. So, that is it for this lecture. Thank you.