

Culture and Disease Paper

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Culture is the set of norms, values, social and moral practices that form the daily life of certain people. In addition, it refers to the ethically accepted standards of living among the given group of people. However, a disease is a condition affecting animals' or plants' bodies that often leads to malfunctioning of the body. Diseases are detected through the identification of symptoms. This paper will focus, basically, on asthma, a respiratory disease. According to Barnes, Rodger, & Thomson (1998), asthma is a chronic respiratory disease that is always characterized by breathing difficulties caused by airflow obstruction; besides, the infection is characterized by constant coughing, wheezing and chest tightness along with pain. The infection is experienced mostly in the United States among the African-American race. The disease is boosted by some peculiar conditions faced by individuals of this race. In the United States, many African-Americans undergo unhealthy living in their residential habitations besides the poor working conditions that they are exposed to. This unfavorable environment has triggered an array of allergic reactions resulting into cases of asthma. Similarly, these unhealthy environments are manifested by overcrowding due to the low economic status of those belonging to this race. The consequences of overcrowding are devastating since they result into poor sanitation problems causing allergies that eventually may cause asthma. A research conducted in the United States shows that 71 per cent of African- Americans reside in the air-polluted zones as compared to the 58 per cent of the whites that inhabit the air-polluted areas. The foregoing evidentially manifests the poor conditions that are experienced by the members of this race that finally lead to cases of asthma among them.

In addition, various environmental factors have led to this disease to be more prevalent in certain geographical areas. During the cold season, as winter, cases of asthma are on the upper

rise. This is owing to the fact that cold conditions induce allergies that are crucial to the muscle contraction in asthma. Similarly, sudden and dramatic changes during the summer periods induce cases of asthma among the members of this race along with poor conditions they live in. This sudden environmental change has demanded individuals' explicit understanding of the various conditions that attribute to asthma attack in order to adopt the mechanisms to curb this. Asthma infections can be transmitted through two major methods. The main and most spread is , genetically acquired. Douglas & Elward (2010) opine that siblings in most cases will develop asthma infections if their parents undergo asthma conditions. This has been proved in the United States where most cases of children facing asthma conditions are mostly hereditary. Hereditary infections occur in most cases if parents do not undertake pre-delivery measures to ensure protection of the sibling. Secondly, asthma is be acquired by individuals due to their living and working conditions that is to say, their economic and social status. For example, exposure to extreme cold conditions may result into an individual acquiring asthma.

The spreading of the disease can be controlled through two major methods. Post ex-posture strategies can be adopted to ensure that hereditary spread avoided. In times of pregnancy, mothers should avoid indulgence in smoking activities that can increase the probability of asthma cases as such activity is found to be one of the factors that can lead to the siblings experiencing cases of asthma. Consequently, adverse environmental conditions that may cause asthma in pregnant mothers should be avoided. In cases, where one or both of the parents already suffer from this disease, sudden changes in temperature and humidity can make asthma more severe thus, may further result into cases of asthma among their siblings. Similarly, Douglas & Elward (2010) reiterate that precautionary measures should be undertaken during birth to prevent hereditary spreading of the disease. These measures may include high standards of care

undertaken during birth to minimize chances of parent-child spread. In attempt to prevent and provide treatment of asthma, various measures have been adopted by the African- American race in the United States. The usage of inhalers and muscle relaxants has massively been adopted in attempt to provide a short - term treatment. Consequently, identification of the triggers is ensured to minimize situations that can make the exacerbation of the disease. The effect of these alternative treatments is that cases of asthma have reduced in the recent past. The introduction of inhalers has effectively reduced the prevalence of severe cases of asthma as the inhalers provide patients with a short-term relief. This is similar to the effects obtained with the adoption of the muscle relaxants.

Social factors have had an influence in spreading and adoption of various measures towards the disease among the African-American population. Social factors basically refer to the ethically accepted ways of practices. In the United States, smoking is considered a normal practice while smoking largely provokes the increase in cases of individuals suffering from asthma conditions. In 2010, a research conducted indicated that majority of the cigarette addicts in the United States were mostly of the African- American origin. Besides, racist attitude in some cases deprived members of this race from accessing quality health services hence heightened the prevalence of these asthma conditions. In the treatment of asthma, beliefs and values have been considered in the United States. There has been a general belief that asthma is a mild disease so individuals always assumed to seek relevant treatment. The search for treatment has further met a setback by a developed notion that it is expensive and that has prevented the low class patients from seeking for treatments. Individual values have also contributed to the measures that have been assumed in the treatments. Ignorance has made persons to be unaware of the available

treatment mechanisms for asthma conditions. This has resulted into severe cases and individuals being more prevalent to the disease that has caused massive demise.

In order to curb cases of asthma, people can indulge in various community health promotions. Barnes, Rodger, & Thomson (1998) agree that sensitization on the dangers and the effects that asthma exposes should be clearly highlighted to develop a sense of concern towards seeking relevant treatments. Consequently, the sensitization should aim at informing the community on the various measures that can be adopted to ensure that the condition is prevented. This may include the identification of allergies apart from being sensitive to changes in weather that are likely to pronounce the condition. In undertaking the community health promotion, parental guidance should be provided to minimize cases of parent-child hereditary of the infection. These counsels may include educating pregnant mothers on the need to avoid smoking that often raises the severe situations of asthma in parents thus, consequently increases the chances of hereditary cases.

In conclusion, it becomes evident that asthma is a chronic condition that can result into devastating effects if not properly handled. Similarly, it is pronounced that the disease is mostly spread through parent-child infection and that various factors plays central part in asthma spread and treatment process. These are social, cultural, and environmental factors. The discussion also gives precedence to community promotion activities in preventing and curbing of the disease.

References

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