

# Challenges Facing Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF) Patients and the Roles of Librarians in Providing E-Health Information Services: A Qualitative Case Study of VVF Patients in Kubau Metropolitan Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** *Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF) is one of the delicate diseases that require extra careful attention to individuals who were diagnosed with its complications. As such, this study aims at finding out the challenges facing VVF patients in Kubau metropolitan area of Kaduna state, Nigeria. Specifically, the roles of librarians in providing E-health information services. In order to achieve these unique objectives, qualitative research methodology was adopted and interviewed ten (10) participants. Findings of this study revealed that uncontrolled leakage, bad order suicidal behavior and stereotyped were the challenges faced by VVF patients in this case study. Finally, the researchers proposed some roles E-Librarians can play in curbing the challenges of VVF patients in Kubau local government area of Kaduna state, Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Challenges, Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF), VVF Patients, E-Librarians, Health Related Information, Qualitative Case Study, Thematic Analysis.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF) is a major women's health problem in the world. Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF) is a type of disease between bladder and Vagina which literally leads to unrolled urine leakage (Ahmad and Holts, 2007). Over, one hundred thousand (100,000) women suffer from VVF disorder in developed countries (W.H.O., 2006). While, in developing countries like Nigeria, about five thousand (5,000) cases of VVF were recorded annually (Sadiq and Daniel, 2000).

If all the above mentioned are true facts, then, there is a critical need to have an empirical study that would identify, capture and document the challenges facing VVF patients in Nigeria.

### **What is known?**

Scholars within health profession have discussed the concept of VVF, types of VVF, causes of VVF, preventive methods of VVF and medications for VVF.

### **What is unknown?**

At the time of writing this article, the researchers confirmed that there is no one single empirical study that identify, capture and document the challenges facing VVF patients in Kubau metropolitan area of Kaduna state, Nigeria. Specifically, the roles of librarians in providing e-health information services.

### **E-Library**

E-library also known as digital library or online library that offers access information materials such as text book, novels or information via internet (McCredia, 2013). Furthermore, E-library can be describe as the combination of computer hardwires and soft wires in order to acquire, store or display electronic information resources.

### **Who is E-Librarian?**

An E-Librarian is a professional librarian with ICT skills that has the ability to acquire, process store, retrieve and disseminate information resources through internet interface (olanlokun, 2005). Moreover, E-Librarian can be describe as an individual who is professionally trained and has the ability to package and re-package relevant information that would breach the information needs and information gap of his/her users, patrons or costumers.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The researchers adopted qualitative research methodology in order to have in-depth understanding of the challenges facing VVF patients in this case study. Qualitative methodology has been proven to be a useful mechanism in identifying human's inner pains, experiences, perceptions and behaviors about a particular issue or incident (Creswell, 2002).

### **Data collection**

The raw data collected from VVF patients in this study were achieved with the help of semi-structured face to face interview. Before, the commencement of the interview, participant were brief about the aims of the study and assured them that their privacy and confidentiality is secured for not mentioning their names or contact address at any stage of this study.

The interview was conducted with 10 VVF patients at their various choices of locations.

### **Data Analysis**

In this study, the data collected from the participants were analyzed using three (3) steps of thematic analysis techniques as proposed by Mile and Huberman (1994).

#### **Step 1: Data Reduction**

The first step is to read and re-read the transcribed data aim at underling sentences or phrases that represents answers to a particular interview question. The researchers recorded sentences and phrases on clean plain sheets of paper.

#### **Step 2: Data display**

At this stage the searchers grouped all sentences that answered the interviewed question together and formed 4 sub-themes.

#### **Step 3: Conclusion drug & vindication**

At this final step, the researchers re-check and re-confirmed the sub-themes and condense them together to formed 3 themes that explained the challenges of VVF patients in this case study as described in table 1.

### **Ethical consideration**

In order to abide by the ethical consideration governing health research reports the researchers were given approval by the ethics board of Ahmadu Bello University teaching hospital Shika. More so, each participant were brief about the purpose of the study and assured them that their names would not be mentioned anywhere in this study in order to ensure their confidentiality.

## **RESULTS**

Relevant that were collected and analyzed in this study generated several themes and sub-themes as presented below:

**Table 1: Challenges facing Vesico Vagina Fistula patients in Kubau metropolitan area of Kaduna state, Nigeria**

| Investigation  | Theme                   | Sub-themes                        |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| What are the challenges facing Vesico Vagina Fistula patients in Kubau metropolitan area of Kaduna state, Nigeria? | Psychical challenges    | Uncontrolled leakage<br>Bad order |
|  | Psychological challenge | Suicidal behavior                 |
|  | Sociological challenge  | Stereotyped                       |

### Psychical Challenges

Physical challenges as a theme in this study have generated some few sub-themes such as uncountable leakage and bad order.

#### *Uncontrolled Leakage*

Uncountable leakage as a sub-theme in this study comprises narrations of VVF patients in Kubau metropolis with regards to the shameful felling they experienced. For example one participant narrated that:

*uhm! (Pause for a while) my major problem with this disease is than I cannot control my urine. I remember the day my in-laws visited us in our house I was trying to bring refreshment to them suddenly I started urinating non-stop [Pause and shade tears]. I was so ashamed of myself*

Another participant with different perception stated reported that:

*“Kai! (Shouted loudly) I still have that flash-back in my brain, the day I thought I stated feeling fine I escorted one of my friend to the market then the person next to me was like asking me “is that a water running between your legs or what?”. Kai! Mtsww it was so embarrassing experience [Pause and shade tears]”.*

#### *Bad Order*

VVF patients in this case study also reported bad order as one of the challenges they experience. This claim can be trace in the word of the participant when she stated that:

*“Well, the most irritating problem I have with this disease in noting rather than the unpleasant smell of my body. No matter how powered performed I spray on my body I still smell bad and don’t feel comfortable.”*

### Psychological Challenge

Psychological challenge as a theme in this study have generated one major sub-theme which was described as societal behavior as explained below.

#### *Suicidal Behavior*

Societal behavior sub-theme comprises a lot of psychological issues related to VVF disease such as how the patients felt like committing suicide as a result of stigmatization attitude they from some individuals. For example, one of the participants stated that:

*“Gush! Well seriously speaking due to the level of depression and sometimes the negative attitude I received from people around me really made me mad. I sometimes felt like killing myself but thank God for my family support.”*

Another participant with similar but different version experience stated that:

*“Ah! You [The interviewer] see I felt like my life has come to an end because, I had so many voices in my brain telling me to drink rat poison and end this miserable life. But, Yah! Thank God I received some advice from my co-patients I meet in this hospital (Ahmadu Bello university teaching hospital Shika Zaria) and am somehow ok now.”*

### **Sociological challenge**

Sociological challenge as a theme in this study has generated one major sub-theme which was described as stereotyped as explained below.

#### **Stereotyped**

Stereotyped as a sub-theme comprises a lot of sociological complications related to VVF disease.. For example, one of the participants stated that:

*“Ehn! Am another issue with this disease I faced in nothing rather than the way many of my close friends disassociated themselves from me because they claimed am smelling bad and I one time over heard them gossiping about me.”*

Another participant claimed that:

*“uhm, you see there was a time I attended a wedding ceremony of one of my friend and you know how women behave in this kind of gathering. So wherever I go around the venue people were like uhm this is terrible smelling and don't like to sit near me because they don't wana be infected with my wahala (problem).”*

### **Data Discussion**

The data collected and analyzed in this study were discussed below:

- (1) This study found out those VVF patients in this case study encounter so many challenges such as uncontrolled urine leakage and smell bad order. This findings tally with the findings of Kabir, Iliya and Umar (2004) who find out that VVF patients in Kano state experienced uncontrolled urine leakage and smelling bad which are resulted to social stigmatization.
- (2) Moreover, this study also found out that psychological challenge such as suicidal behavior as a result of negative attitudes VVF patients received from individuals around their community was also another challenge VVF patients in this case study experienced.

This is really a serious problem, imagine a human being suffering from depression and anxiety even thinking of ending the precious one short soul he/she has. Timothy (2018) reported that among the top reasons why individuals wants to end their lives is when they were being diagnosed with serious medical conditions and also even when they are being socially isolated especially as a result of bullying.

(3) Finally, this study also find out that VVF patients in this case study experienced socio-cultural challenge such as discrimination from friends and stereotyped as unwanted individual in their various communities.

This finding is corresponded with the study of Mselle and Koli (2015) who found out that VVF patients in Tanzania experienced social discrimination therefore, they were stereotyped as individuals who cannot contribute to the family income financially and also those who cannot bear children neither their satisfy their suitors sexual desires.

## **CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION**

Conclusively, this study positive that VVF patients in Kubau local government are of Kaduna state Nigeria encounter several challenges in their everyday life activities. This is because there are insistences in the data collected that support this claimed. For example, some of the participants reported that their major challenges with the disease are uncontrolled urine leakage and smelling bad order. Moreover, some of the patients claimed that they experience high rate of depression due stereotyping and stigmatization they received from people in their various communities.

Therefore, the researchers proposed the following roles of E-Librarians in curbing the challenges of VVF patients in Kubau local government area of Kaduna state:

1. E-Librarians of medical libraries within Kaduna state should be able to organize seminars in collaboration with medical doctors aimed at communication new ideas for controlling uncontrollable leakage and smelling bad odor. Moreover, the seminar sessions should be recorded via video/audio devices for the purpose of preserving and communicating it to online VVF patients that were not able to attain the seminars.
2. E-Librarians should bear in mind that it is their responsibilities to acquire, process, store, retrieve and communicate medical information to patients especially those suffering from chronic diseases like VVF. Therefore, the researchers of this study recommend that E-Librarians in conjunction with behavioral counselors should provide relevant information to VVF patients through psychotherapy counseling services.
3. E-Librarians of medical libraries within Kaduna state should unite themselves and organize anti-stereotyping campaign against VVF patients through social medias such as Whatsapp, facebook, snapchart and instigram. Furthermore, the E-Librarians should subscribe to YouTube handle aimed at uploading anti-stigmatization video clips.

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