

Basics of Health Promotion and Education Intervention
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Lecture - 29
Overview of Pretesting

Welcome back, so we were discussing on the basics of health promotion education intervention. Now today's discussion is on pretesting of health promotion education intervention tools. Now before we go actually into the intervention, I mean pretesting part of the intervention tools, this lecture will cover the overview of pretesting.

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CONCEPTS COVERED

- Concept of pretesting
- Time needs for pretesting
- Pretesting and revision

The slide features a grid of icons representing various social determinants of health: Family Income, Employment, Our communities, Access to health services, Health, Education, Social support, Social, Environment, and Health. A small inset image of the speaker is visible in the bottom right corner of the slide.

So, today we will be covering first is the concept of pretesting, then the time needs for pretesting that is how much time is needed, how do we devote the time etcetera and then the pretesting and revision, because see in when we are discussing about pretesting revision is a very important part because that is one of the very important objectives of performing a pretesting.

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So, what is pretesting? In fact, now pretesting is a process for determining a target group say target group's reaction to an understanding of health messages or behaviour change information before the materials are produced in final form. So, the first bullet it in fact conveys the whole philosophy behind pretesting. When we are discussing about theories of behaviour change or when we are discussing about health promotion programs.

Implementing behaviour change theories and implementing the change objectives in fact there are two parts one is the materials or the resources that are put in to bring about that behaviour change and the second part is the target group's reaction to it. Because that particular reaction; will ultimately determine whether or not that the material or the resources that were put in for behaviour change will ultimately be effective.

So, that is the basic reason we do a pretesting, so that our material that we put in for bringing about a behaviour change that becomes effective. So, that we do not waste too much of resources on any ineffective material. We want to understand which material is going to be effective beforehand. That is why it is a process because, I mean it is kind of obvious the process for which determines the target groups.

Because for health education interventions the target groups may vary. Because, the same message may not be applicable to all the population groups, may not be applicable to all the demographic groups per se that there may be certain cultural differences there may be certain age differences there may be certain gender differences so, many factors can be there. So, that is why we have to focus on every target group for which the message we are devising.

And we have to understand their reaction and how they are understanding that particular health message to bring about the behaviour change. So, the whole process is basically understanding what is the target group's reaction and how the target group is understanding that particular health message. And why do we need to document all these things? Because we, ultimately want to produce the material in a final form that is effective.

So, pretesting is the activity done before producing the materials in the final form. So, what happens during pretesting? The members of the target group are asked to react to draft BCC materials. The materials which are not yet produced in the final form are called the draft materials. As in all other cases the draft materials are subject to change and after finalization of the material then only that material.

Or that intervention tool you can say is ultimately put into play in the in actual marketplace or I mean, you can say in actual social market. Because the society and the social market these are these are two important terms that goes, I mean kind of hand in hand when we discuss about health promotion intervention, I mean in promotional education intervention tools. So, in the social market the draft BCC materials are first tested among the representative of the target groups.

Now, then the responses are noted and they are analysed the materials are then revised. So, that is why revision is so important in a HPE intervention tool. Because, after that I mean that

revised material is now acceptable to the community members or the target groups and it is now effective to bring about the change in the social market. Now, the pretesting may be conducted several times before the final materials are produced.

So, our objective was to conduct the whole process before the materials are finalized and for finalizing the material, we may have to perform pretesting over and over again, because in one moment suppose this is cycle one. In cycle one what happens we have a material suppose we have a material a general awareness material, suppose, on cervical cancer. Now, that is general material that suppose we want to display in different dispensaries.

And we want to understand whether the population or the target population... suppose the target population in this case are post-menopausal females. Now, we want to understand whether that pretesting material that cervical cancer related material for behaviour change. Whether that is acceptable to the target population or not whether that is, I mean adaptable to the target population or whether the target population is really understanding to it or not.

So, all these reactions these reactions we want to document during the pretesting phase. In the first phase in the first pre testing phase suppose we get some reaction that the fonts are too large. There is no content related complaint from the target population but some people are saying because they are all elderly, I cannot read this much from this far distance like this way these are these all can be your modification or division parts.

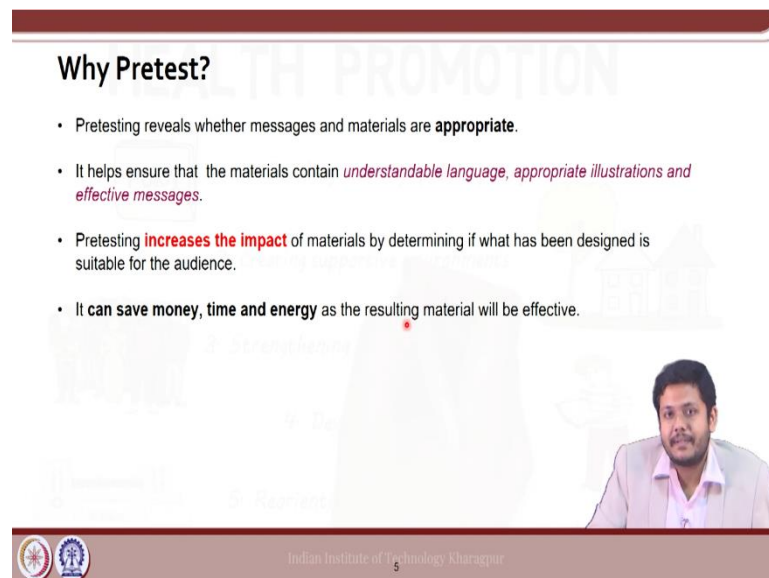
So, suppose you have this kind of complaint now you revise your material you make it in a larger font you keep it simple and you divide it in simple sentences in shorter terms and more culturally relevant way. Then again you pre-test again you get some feedback again you change according to the feedback. And again, you pre-test but remember, the changes with respect to the feedback should not be in a, I mean in such a way that it ultimately returns to the original material itself.

Because then again, all this activity it will be futile. So, the feedback the seeking of feedback and incorporating the feedback it has to be systematic in order to produce a better material. So, this is a kind of an art inside the science, because you may not always have a particular measurable thing for how to change the materials. But you have to be understandable and

logical when you are changing the material in, what do you mean by changing I mean when you are revising the material.

So, this process of revision can be cyclical and it can have more than one iterations. And then what I was discussing that it can be a cyclical process with a recurring feedback system. The cyclical process is it does not mean in a cyclical manner that it will ultimately end up where it started that is what I was warning you precisely that it should not end up where it was all starting. So, cyclical in a way you can call it a spiral way like this you are having one cycle then again you are having another cycle then, again you are having another cycle but ultimately it is progressing in this direction right in this.

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Why Pretest?

- Pretesting reveals whether messages and materials are **appropriate**.
- It helps ensure that the materials contain *understandable language, appropriate illustrations and effective messages*.
- Pretesting **increases the impact** of materials by determining if what has been designed is suitable for the audience.
- It **can save money, time and energy** as the resulting material will be effective.

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So, why pretest? I mean we were discussing regarding what is pretesting? Now, the next question is why pretest? From our discussion we have already understood that if we do not pre-test, we are at risk of implementing some materials or some intervention which may not be effective and thereby we may be ultimately wasting the resources. So, in public health point of view I mean from where we stand as a public health specialist, it is a kind of a textbook teaching that resources are limited and we should not waste the resources. So, one of the important aspects in pretesting is to limit your resources and effectively utilize them. Now, with that let us discuss, why do we actually pre-test? What happens is pre-testing reveals whether the messages and materials are appropriate or not. So, if we have to make a material effective first thing it has to be appropriate.

Then we have to understand it helps, I mean the pre-testing helps ensure that the materials contain understandable language because you have to communicate the change objective to the target population. So, the understandable language must be there, there must be appropriate illustrations and effective messages. So, it is not only about being appropriate or having an understandable language.

See appropriateness is more related to a cultural and social pattern because whether it is appropriate or not like that and then understandable language is in terms of comprehension of the target population, not only these two parts, it must have appropriate illustrations. I mean in terms of illustration you can consider some figures as part of the materials or messages suppose in a poster you are depicting certain figures which will, I mean incur behaviour changes in the participants.

That may be one option and then also the messages that are displayed in the material they also should be effective. Now for being an effective message we have certain criteria and the effectiveness of messages is it is also a kind of a measurable thing. Because if you compare with some other or certain standard interventions you can get a fairly good idea of how effective that message is.

But when you are getting the effectiveness of message when you are trying the effectiveness of message the measurement that you are getting is basically an inclusive measurement of all these dimensions because, a message or a material is only as good as all these things are put in whether the matter is, I mean appropriate whether it is understandable whether the illustrations are appropriate all these things then the message.

So, anyone it is not enough to produce a good material, so ultimately why do we pre-test. We pre-test to make a material robust in terms of all these dimensions. Then only you can produce an effective intervention all this thing has to be there. So, next pretesting increases the impact of materials by determining if what has been designed is suitable for the audience or not. So, while we were discussing the appropriateness pretesting next discusses the impact of the materials.

Because, without understanding the impact without understanding whether it is suitable for the audience or not, I mean in terms of suitability you also have certain issues related to

appropriateness, sensitivity, cultural impact... all these are all related domains but the key word here is the impact. So, pretest makes you understand the impact of the intervention per say.

One thing I must clarify in this regard is when we are really understanding the impact of a material it is usually taken care of in later stages of pretesting. Because, in the earlier stages of pre-testing or suppose in first one or two cycles of pretesting we usually refine the materials that is depicted. We usually change the messages we usually change the illustrations we usually change how it is displayed only after all these refinements are completed.

Then on then only we can assess the impact of the pretesting material. And ultimately what I have, I mean what I have started the lecture with is it can save money time and energy; in short it; can save resources as a result... resulting material will be effective.

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Who Should Conduct Pretesting?

- A **small focused team** of key program staff (3-4 people).
- It is best to find people **mostly similar to the priority audience** - who are trained in pretesting - to lead the actual pretesting exercises.
- Having someone who is like the audience will encourage honesty and openness during the process.

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So, the next question is who should conduct pre-testing? So, we first started with what is pretesting we know why do we have to pre-test a particular intervention, next who will pre-test the thing. We have an intervention but who will pre-test the intervention. So, we must have a small focused team of key program staffs. I mean key program staffs are important because remember one thing, 'key program staffs' does not always mean only the national health programs or particular program.

What is going on their program staffs may be whatever program or a project we want to implement in a community that may itself be a program in itself. So, for that program you have certain key staffs for that particular intervention you have certain key players in there. So, they are your small focus team usually we have three four people a group comprising of three four people who should be doing the pretesting.

It is best to find people mostly similar to the priority audience who are trained in pretesting and to lead the actual pretesting exercises. In this context see we have in our aids control program link workers and we also have in our aids control programs and in also other programs certain community representatives. Consider this consider in our health program as a whole we have at the grass root level the Asha workers they are also represented from the community.

So, when we are going to pre-test actually, we have to have some people this, I mean this small focus team this small focus team should be comprised of some people who are more similar to the priority audience. So, for example we can consider the Asha's when we are trying to implement some intervention in a particular rural community and obviously, we can consider them if we they are trained in pre-testing.

If I mean that particular skill, we have to impart on them and they have to be trained on that particular part of hp intervention pre-testing or in pre-testing material as a whole then we can include them in that small focused team. Because this small focus team is going to ultimately conduct the pre-testing and is ultimately going to revise the materials. Now, having someone who is like the audience will ultimately encourage honesty and openness during the process.

Because what happens if you include suppose an ASHA worker from the village it helps you to understand what are the lacunae in your material in terms of it is contents and also how it is displayed. Because, if you do not have someone from the community only, I mean you are lacking the feedback from the community you are lacking the community need. So, when you are doing the pretesting part, it also incorporates the community need.

That is why you need to have a small team and that small team should comprise of some people of, I mean who are kind of representative to the priority audience of that particular group but also, they must be trained in the pre-testing part and this ultimately helps in

encouraging honesty and openness during this process, because then only the material that will be provided will be an effective one.

Because it will be free from the biases, biases may be from either side. Biases may be there from the community side biases may be there from the researcher side. So, when you get a mix of both these groups you tend to avoid the biases that may have occurred if you had only one group. So, this is how a pre-testing group should be combined.

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When Should Pretesting be Conducted?

- Pretesting should be completed **before** components of the communication campaign are finalized, produced and disseminated.

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Then the next question is when should pre-testing be conducted? So, now we know who should conduct the pre-testing part and why pre-testing is needed at all. Next our question for discussion is when should this pretesting be conducted the time. So, pretesting should be completed before components of communication campaign are finalized, produced and disseminated.

Now, if you go back to the first slide... this... when component is already mentioned like before the materials are produced in final form. So, how do we understand that it should be conducted or it should be completed. Simple conduction is not enough it should be completed, I mean in terms of incorporating all the changes everything should be there. And this should be done before the communication campaign or the process as a whole.

It is finalized and finally produced and disseminated in the community. It is as simple as that; it is the only one prerequisite for when question for pre testing.

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Estimated Time Needed

Completing pretesting typically **takes between two weeks and two months** depending on:

- the testing method
- the objectives of the pretest
- the number of campaign elements to be tested
- the number of revisions necessary

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So, the next discussion is the time needs, this is another important concept. So, usually pre testing completing the pre testing but usually it takes typically between, I mean 2 weeks to 2 months. It can depend, I mean it can vary so it depends usually on the testing methods. Now, see all these parts will be covering in our next lecture. But we have to understand that all these things these are the determinants of time need for a pre testing of HP intervention.

So, first is the testing method, how are we going to do the pre-test. Next is the objectives of the pre-test because all the pre-tests, I mean not always carry the same objective some pre-test may have one or two different objectives or some pre-test may have extra emphasis on some objectives like this way. So, that is an important part then the number of campaign elements to be tested because a campaign may have a poster element.

A campaign may have a simple verbal communication element a campaign may have audio visual element. So, the more the elements of a campaign the more time is required for pre-testing, then the number of revisions necessary. Because, I told you it is a cyclical process by way that it keeps on improving in itself. So, the number of revisions the more we revise our material the more time we need.

But usually, it takes between two weeks to two months, because the pre-testing material which requires least revision and has minimum number of components or minimum number of materials to be tested it takes around two weeks to complete.

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Message development, pretesting and revision

Message development should be based on the **audience analysis**

The steps to be followed are:

- **Develop message concepts** (preliminary illustrations, words, phrases and theme lines or slogans)
- **Pretest concepts** with groups or representatives of intended audience, especially pictures and other visual materials, which are easily misunderstood
- **Create complete messages and materials** (e.g. radio programs, posters, drama/puppet shows)
- **Pretest messages and materials** for comprehension, recall, strong and weak points, personal relevance, with representatives of the intended audience before final production
- **Re-test** existing materials before reproducing



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So, what is the basic utility of revision and how all these things like material development. Here, I have mentioned message development because messages are if you remember the communication framework the basic communication the SMS framework there was this m called messages. So, the in any kind of communication any kind of intervention we have message.

So, for message development for pre testing and revision what is needed the important part is the audience analysis. Because, we have to target the audience it is based on those audiences based on the target population we have to prepare the HP tool. So, for that HP tool preparation we have to do an audience analysis first, because if you remember we were discussing all these things during our communication related lecture week.

So, this is not new but you have to remember that for pre-testing also audience analysis is important because, ultimately the message development or the material for intervention that material itself is based on the audience analysis part. So, these are basically not the steps for message development but these are basically the steps for pre-testing. These are an outline of how do we need to do a pre-test we will be discussing the steps of pre-test in our next lecture.

But just to give you a brief overview of what do we do when we are asked to pre-test some interventions. First, we develop a message concept, I mean because without having any intervention we cannot do any pre-testing. Then we pre-test the concepts with the groups and representative of the intended audience because before we go on to develop a material, we have to gain some proof of concept or we must validate the concept itself.

Then we create the completed messages and the materials, we intend to complete the intervention material then we go on to pre-test the intervention material. Because here I have written pre-test messages and materials because, in short you can call it intervention material as a whole. Now, when we actually go for pre-test we go for testing of comprehension, we go for recall.

Because you may need to recall a message what is displayed, in suppose, in a dispensary or in a public meeting the population may need to recall the event or recall the message to perform the certain change behaviour. So, for that the pre-test messages and materials we require it for comprehension recall strong and weak points what are the strengths and limitations for the messages then the personal relevance.

Because a message ultimately may not be tailored to any individual needs. So, personal relevance is also important and after we complete the pre-testing part in a single cycle remember then we have the retest. How do we do the retest? In a similar way we do a pre-testing because, in fact this retest part is the subsequent cycles of a pre-testing process. So, this is an outline of the HPE intervention pre-testing, you can set a format or I mean you can simply say it as a general outline only.

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CONCLUSION

- Pretesting is a process for determining a target group's reaction to and understanding of health messages or behavior change information before materials are produced in final form
- May be a cyclical process
- Pretesting should be completed before components of the communication campaign are finalized, produced and disseminated
- Materials must be retested before reproducing

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We will be discussing those parts in our next slides in our next lecture in fact. So, in conclusion what have we learnt in this lecture, we have learnt that the pre-testing process is basically done to finalize an intervention material. And it is also done to understand and to

note down the reactions of the individual groups or the target groups for a particular intervention material a message a poster any audio-visual aid it can be anything but the reaction is important.

And that reaction of the audience is what which drives the change in the material to ultimately produce it in a final form. Then it may be a cyclical process because it may have more than one iteration. Pre-testing should be completed before all the communicates are the components are finalized and ultimately produced to the community and disseminated as in the large population. Then the all the materials must be retested before reproducing.

Because, retesting is the subsequent parts of pre-testing on the subsequent cycles of pretesting and that is also a mandatory part.

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The slide is titled "RESOURCES" in a dark red font. It contains a list of three references:

- Knutson A. Pretesting Health Education Materials. American Journal of Public Health and the Nations Health, 1953;43(2):193-197.
- Dobe M. Health promotion and Education: Foundations for Changing Health Behavior. 1st ed. Kolkata:Academic Publishers,2022.
- How to Conduct Effective Pretests [Internet]. Fhi360.org. (cited 18 April 2022). Available from: <https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/AIDSCAP%20-%20How%20to%20Conduct%20Effective%20Pretests.pdf>

In the bottom right corner of the slide, there is a small video inset showing a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a light-colored shirt, speaking.

So, in our next lecture, we will be discussing the steps and we will be having a bit detail on how to do a pretest. So, the resources will remain the same these are the resources for understanding pre-testing of HPE interventions, I mean this is a classical article regarding pretesting and I also urge you to go through all these materials to have a brief understanding of how do we actually do the pre testing part. So, until next; lecture bye.