

Title: "Developing a Culturally Tailored Diabetes Curriculum for South Asians in the U.S. Using Community-Based Peer Leaders"

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Background:

South Asians in the U.S. have a high risk of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM), often developing it at younger ages and lower body weights compared to other populations. Traditional diabetes management programs frequently lack cultural and linguistic relevance, hindering effective self-management in this diverse community.

Objectives:

This study aimed to develop a culturally tailored diabetes self-management curriculum for South Asians in the U.S., with the goal of improving diabetes outcomes by addressing specific dietary, cultural, and linguistic needs.

Methods:

Over three years, a culturally tailored curriculum was developed using a community-based participatory approach with South Asian Peer Leaders (SAPLs) representing various subgroups. The curriculum was piloted and refined through in-person and online workshops, focusing on culturally relevant education about diet, lifestyle, and medication management. Practical activities and ongoing support via WhatsApp groups and monthly meetings were also included to reinforce learning and sustain engagement. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, clinical outcomes data were not collected; instead, participant feedback guided iterative improvements to the curriculum.

Results:

The curriculum demonstrated high acceptability and relevance, with participants reporting reduced cognitive overload during online sessions and improved engagement with the culturally tailored content. The transition to an online format in 2021 further enhanced accessibility and effectiveness. SAPLs played a crucial role in adapting the curriculum to meet the community's cultural and linguistic needs, leading to sustained involvement and positive feedback.

Conclusion:

This culturally tailored diabetes self-management curriculum shows promise in improving diabetes management among South Asians in the U.S. The iterative feedback process and strong community involvement were key to its success. Future research should assess the curriculum's impact on clinical outcomes to validate its effectiveness.