

How does the Placebo Effect and Framing Effect Relate to Health Care Ethics



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Introduction to the Framing Effect and Placebo Effect

The framing effect is an example of cognitive bias, in which people are given a choice and react in different ways depending on how it is presented. The presentation of a choice or situation in a different context can influence a person's response.

The placebo effect is a psychobiological phenomenon, in which a response to a sham treatment is studied. At its core, the placebo effect is, "the study of how the context of beliefs and values shape brain processes related to perception and emotion and, ultimately, mental and physical health" (Benedetti).

Framing Effect and Health Care Ethics

In a study done by Jiayi Peng and other researchers to illustrate the Framing Effect in medical treatments, it was concluded that, "The results of the present study suggest that medical decision making can be affected by frame descriptions. Attention should be paid on the standardization of description in medical practice.". Evidence of framing affecting medical treatment results causes one to question if the current healthcare ethics medical professionals operate under could be limiting the full potential treatments have to offer. In addition, it is quite possible that "situational framing" could be altering the psyches of patients. In an interview conducted with James Maul O.D., he stated that when describing illness and treatments to patients, it is normal to not hold back any information describing possible negative health effects, and he specifically "sticks to percentages" when describing treatment. Dr. James Maul continued to describe that by fully presenting the severity of diseases, especially Glaucoma, he thinks patients would be more likely to take their health more seriously and seek better treatment. As seen above, it has been observed that the way healthcare providers present information may have significant effects on the effectiveness of treatment. From this concept, one could argue that standards should be put into place to regulate the ethics that healthcare providers operate under, to reduce negative psychological effects that may be dismissed as normal. By revising how healthcare providers speak, present themselves and their information, it is possible that patients could experience better health.

Methods

- Ask a question: Do psychological principles affect the exchange of information between healthcare providers and patients?
- Literature search on the placebo effect (non-invasive)
- Literature search on the framing effect
- Research on power balance bracelets
- Discuss if there could be "situational framing"
- Outline an experiment to test the effects of these two physiological phenomena and see if they interact
- Hypothesize expected results of the experiment and discuss a real-world application to these results (healthcare provider-patient interactions)



"Dialogue between Doctor and Patient - Steemit." Steemit, Jan. 2018

Background on Power Balance Bracelets

Power Balance is a sports lifestyle brand, primarily known for their hologram bracelets, which claimed to use holographic technology based on eastern philosophy. These bracelets became incredibly popular, most likely due to famous athletes and other public figures promoting them. Studies in recent years have proven that the bracelets are little more than placebo, and offer little in terms of kinesthetic enhancement. These studies, as well as the complaints of unsatisfied customers, led to the company being hit with a \$57 million lawsuit in 2011, which also made them abandon their claim that the bracelets improve balance. However, these events seem to be relatively unknown to the general public, and many people still sport these bracelets, unaware of their ineffectiveness.

FUTURE WORK

An experiment will be carried out to test the hypotheses that situational framing and the placebo effect have an impact on the actions of an individual. The experiment will be carried out in two locations. One will be formal, carried out in a university laboratory with proper lab attire being worn by the administrators and a strict and specific procedure being adhered to. The second will be much more casual, held in a central and casual location on campus, with administrators dressed down and administering the experiment with more casual language and attitudes. A volunteer sample of approximately thirty subjects will be tested at each location. Subjects will be provided with a power band and have their balance tested before and after use in accordance with the guidelines of the official NCAA concussion assessment protocol. Additionally, half of the test subjects in each location will be shown a promotional advertisement video for the power band before the assessment, while the other half will receive only a brief description of what the power band is. Examining the results of this experiment should shed more light on the situational framing effect, and how it coincides with the placebo effect to cause variation in individuals' perception of information presented to them. From this, the approach physicians take when describing procedures and medications to patients can be scrutinized, and the current state of ethics in the medical field can be assessed.



"Power Balance ." Power Balance , www.powerbalance.com

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