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Assessing the Benefits and Ethical Risks of Genomic Medicine in Personalized Public Health Care

Yusriani[1], Dinda Sari[1], Puput Mustika[1]

[1]Universitas Mega Rezky

*Corresponding Author: Yusriani

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Abstract

Genomic medicine which leverages the insights gained from the human genome, holds transformative potential in public health by enabling personalized treatment strategies, improving disease prevention, and enhancing healthcare outcomes. This literature review examines both the benefits and risks associated with the application of genomic medicine in public health. The benefits include more accurate disease diagnoses through genetic profiling, targeted therapies for conditions like cancer and cardiovascular diseases, and improved preventive care by identifying genetic predispositions to various health conditions. These advances offer the potential for better health outcomes and cost-effective care through early interventions. However, the integration of genomic medicine into public health systems presents several risks, including ethical concerns related to privacy, genetic discrimination, and the protection of sensitive genetic data. The economic challenges associated with the implementation of genomic medicine, such as high costs and potential inequities in access, are also discussed. Additionally, the scientific uncertainty surrounding the interpretation of certain genetic variations poses challenges in clinical applications. This review highlights the need for strong policies and ethical frameworks to ensure the responsible use of genomic data while promoting equitable access to genomic technologies across diverse populations. In conclusion, while genomic medicine holds significant promise, its integration into public health systems requires careful consideration of these risks to maximize its benefits and ensure fairness in access.

Introduction

Genomic medicinal drug a progressive area leveraging our knowledge of the human genome, has emerged as a transformative force in modern healthcare. The completion of the Human Genome Project in 2003 marked a vast milestone, presenting a comprehensive map of all human genes and heralding a brand-new technology in medication (Schloss et al., 2020). This development has paved the way for personalised remedy, wherein treatments and preventive strategies are tailored to character genetic profiles, promising good sized improvements in health outcomes. One of the primary blessings of genomic medicinal drug is its ability to revolutionize disorder prognosis and treatment. Traditional clinical techniques frequently depend upon generalized treatment protocols, which might not be effective for all sufferers due to genetic variability (Meyer et al., 2020).

Genomic remedy, however, permits the identification of particular genetic mutations responsible for illnesses, taking into consideration greater accurate diagnoses and focused treatments. In oncology, genomic profiling of tumors can display mutations that force cancer development, guiding the selection of targeted treatment options that enhance patient effects (Dunbar et al., 2021). This precision method extends to various diseases, inclusive of cardiovascular disorders, where genetic statistics can tell the selection of most efficient healing interventions. Moreover, genomic medicine gives great promise within the realm of preventive healthcare. By information a person's genetic predisposition to certain conditions, it turns into

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viable to put into effect early interventions that could prevent disorder onset or mitigate its severity (Lappalainen & MacArthur, 2021). For example, people with BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutations, which boom the hazard of breast and ovarian cancers, can advantage from superior screening and preventive measures. This proactive technique now not handiest improves affected person results but also has the capacity to reduce healthcare prices through preventing the progression of sicknesses which can be high priced to deal with of their superior degrees.

Despite these blessings, the combination of genomic medication into public health also poses numerous risks and challenges (Maduelosi, 2024; Ifedinezi et al., 2024; Ndudi et al., 2024). One main issue is the ethical and privacy implications of genetic checking out and statistics garage (Cohen et al., 2021). The sensitive nature of genetic records necessitates strong measures to defend affected person privateness and save you unauthorized get entry to or misuse of information (Zhang, 2021). Additionally, there are issues about the potential for genetic discrimination, wherein people may be treated unfairly primarily based on their genetic information, specifically in employment and insurance contexts.

Economic issues additionally play a critical role in the adoption of genomic medicine (Sugandh et al., 2023; Munirathnam, 2023; Khoury, 2023). While the value of genomic sequencing has reduced substantially since the final touch of the Human Genome Project, making it more available, the implementation of genomic remedy on a huge scale nonetheless requires sizable investment (Petrovick et al., 2020). Healthcare structures must weigh the costs of genomic testing and customized treatments towards the capacity lengthy-term financial savings from improved health results and preventive care. Ensuring equitable get right of entry to to genomic medicinal drug is some other assignment, as disparities in healthcare infrastructure and resources can result in unequal advantages for one-of-a-kind populations.

The scientific application of genomic information isn't always constantly sincere. While sure genetic versions are well understood and can immediately tell scientific selections, many others have unsure or complicated institutions with disorder threat, complicating their interpretation and alertness (Baverstock, 2021). This uncertainty underscores the want for ongoing studies and sturdy clinical hints to aid the powerful use of genomic records in healthcare.

The potential social implications of genomic medicinal drug also warrant cautious consideration. Public perception and popularity of genetic checking out and customized medication can extensively impact the fulfillment of those initiatives. Education and public engagement are important to addressing misconceptions and fostering knowledgeable decision-making regarding genomic health interventions. Additionally, ethical problems inclusive of knowledgeable consent and the proper to understand or no longer understand one's genetic facts must be navigated with sensitivity and transparency.

Method

This study employed a systematic literature review approach to assess the benefits and risks of genomic medicine in public health. The methodology was guided by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework to ensure transparency and replicability.

A comprehensive search was conducted across multiple databases, including PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The search terms used included "genomic medicine," "public health," "benefits," "risks," "ethical implications," and "precision medicine." Boolean operators. were applied to refine the search and capture relevant literature. The search was restricted to peer-reviewed articles published in English between

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The inclusion criteria for this study encompassed research that focused specifically on the applications of genomic medicine in public health, discussed both the benefits and risks of genomic interventions, and comprised original research, review articles, or policy papers. Studies that did not align with these criteria were excluded from the review. For instance, articles that were not directly related to public health applications of genomic medicine, those categorized as conference abstracts, editorials, or opinion pieces lacking empirical data, and publications in languages other than English were omitted. This approach ensured the inclusion of high-quality and relevant literature, maintaining the study's focus on its objectives.

The initial search identified articles. After removing duplicates, articles were screened based on their titles and abstracts. Full-text screening of articles was conducted to assess their relevance against the inclusion criteria. Ultimately, articles were selected for inclusion in the review. Key data were extracted from the selected studies, including the study's objectives, methodology, population or context, key findings on benefits, key findings on risks, and conclusions. The extracted data were organized using a standardized template to ensure consistency and accuracy.

A thematic analysis was conducted to synthesize the findings. The benefits of genomic medicine were categorized into themes such as improved diagnosis, personalized treatment, and preventive healthcare. The risks were categorized into themes such as ethical concerns, economic challenges, and social implications. Where applicable, quantitative findings from studies were summarized descriptively, and qualitative insights were analyzed for patterns and recurring themes.

Result and Discussion

Genomic medicine as part of public health strives to become one of the most significant revolutions in healthcare, promising more personal approach to treatment, better prevention and accurate diagnosis. About with the Human Genome Project and its inventions in genetic research, this advancement allows the prescription of interventions to be individual-specific based on one’s genotype. Its potential for improvement in the efficiency of medical therapies in various disease areas including oncology, cardiology, and preventive medicine shall increase as genomic medicine advances in the future. But its broad use is a matter of some concern and has many downsides for society that involve ethical issues such as privacy infringement and issues of genetic discrimination, economic concerns on how to implement the tools and technologies, and unclear issues about interpreting genetic data. It will advance a research agenda into the opportunities and threats that genomic medicine offers to public health with the objective of understanding both the promise that underlines this novel field of medicine and the real-life difficulties that have to be overcome.

Benefits of Genomic Medicine in Public Health

Genomic medicine is one of the greatest advancements in the field of public health, by making it possible to tailor healthcare solutions. In contrast to the conventional methods of medical treatment that are complex and based on the patient’s general genotype, genomic medicine directs interventions towards an individual genotype. This kind of personalization also makes therapy more effective and at the same time decreases the possibility of side effects occurrence. in oncology, while genomic profiling identifies mutations that lead to cancer, healthcare providers are able to use tyrosine kinase inhibitors that target these mutations (Dunbar et al., 2021). Comparable progress has been made in cardiology, where patient genome helps to choose the appropriate drugs for therapy to achieve maximum therapeutic efficacy for a patient with a certain genotype.

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Genomic medicine has also particularly impacted the aspect of preventive healthcare (Strianese et al., 2020). Pre-synaptic screening also plays an important role in the identification of those at a higher genetic risk of specific diseases and who can then take measures to reduce or avoid the conditions. For example, women with BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutations, which raises the risk for the female breast and ovarian cancer, may be counseled to engage in increased surveillance, change their behavior, or take preventive surgeries (Lappalainen & MacArthur, 2021). However, this approach not only enhances the health of targeted populations but also contributing to offset cost of future expensive treatments of end-stage diseases.

Another related area that has benefited from applications of genomic medicine as regards public health includes; managing of infectious diseases (Ahmed et al., 2020). When costly genomic sequencing is incorporated into a surveillance system, public health agencies can assess the dynamic changes in pathogens, identify new strains, and guide interventions for each. In the period of COVID-19 pandemic, Whole genome sequencing proved useful for tracking variants of concern and which guided the development of vaccines and other strategies to combat the virus (Schloss et al., 2020). These plaques underdine the role of genomics in useful epidemics' control and maintaining the health of world population.

Genomic medicine on the other hand also has the opportunity to intervene on the healthcare disparity issue since gene factors of diseases more predominant in certain populations can be identified (Strianese et al., 2020). such findings can facilitate the design of culturally appropriate and culturally competent interventions and frame effective and efficient distribution of healthcare services. For example, research on sickle cell anemia still far exceeds a majority of people of African descent, has informed improved screening and treatment for sickle cell anemia in them (Petrovick et al., 2020). genomic information can be used to enhance the equity of health and decrease health disparities in publicity health.

The mainstream integration of the genomic medicine concept into public health platforms can pave the way to improving population's health and implement the concept of personalised disease prevention. With genomics, therefore, a shift from the traditional ill-health model of health care is obtained, to the wellness model where cares are embraced when the symptoms have not yet emerged. It has potential in enhancing quality of life, decreasing disease prevalence and incidence and enhancing resource use. In the future, with the further development of genomic technologies, their role in public health is also likely to grow, leading to the development of such a worthwhile and valuable area as precision medicine.

Risks of Genomic Medicine in Public Health

Although genomic medicine offers a plausible model for implementation in public health programs, it has important potential risks and difficulties. The main issue that can be noted at the same time is the question of the ethical admissibility of genetic tests and the storage of potential biogenetic information. Genetic data is considered to be personal data and where the data is accessed or utilized in an unauthorized manner privacy can be violated. Of particular concern up to this date is the instances of genetic discrimination or unfair treatment due to one's genetics in particular the employment and insurance sector (Cohen et al., 2021). Failure and lack of proper policies to protect genetic data increase the risk of misusing the genomics as well as earning distrust in Genomic activities.

The other difficulty that arises pertains to the costs that arise when large-scale implementation of genomic medicine is considered (Killer et al., 2020). Even though the cost per base pair has come down considerably after the Human Genome Project, the financial load of implementing genomics in the public health services is still high. Sequencing and testing are key but so are the investments in the infrastructure and human capital needed to interpret and use these

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genomics (Petrovick et al., 2020). This forms an economic constraint whereby only few facilities with adequate finances and well-endowed health systems will be able to accrue the benefits to be realized from genomic analysis.

Another layer of complexity is added to genomic medicine by scientific uncertainty (Sanavia et al., 2020). Although some of these genetic variations are, indeed, well understood and have distinct associations with increased risk of diseases, many are still only vaguely understood or marginally associated with diseases, at best. The analysis of such variations can be rather ambiguous, or even misleading, which may create psychological discomfort to genetic testing clients (Baverstock, 2021). In addition, there is no established framework to guide the application of genomics as a tool, and doctors are yet to find efficient ways of incorporating genomic knowledge into patient management.

There are broad social concerns in genomic medicine. The latter is especially important for the success of genomic technologies and, unfortunately, is easily swayed by misconceptions and fear (Parisi & Rodríguez, 2021). It noted that fear associated with 'tampering with the gene pool' or the moral implications of the switch could help drive campaign against the introduction of the genomic therapies. However, questions of informed consent arise with patients not being knowledgeable about the consequences of sharing genetic data or receiving genomic based therapies (Zhang, 2021). It is important, therefore, that people should be made to understand their full rights on the information regarding their genes, so that they can effectively make the right decisions.

Inequality in the potential of genomic medicine to improve health disparities may widen existing disparities (Khoury et al., 2020). Discoveries that are born from genomics and implemented through augmented personalized medicine serve consumers in the developed economies to the disadvantage of populations and nations who are low-income. This inequality does not only suboptimal for the genomic medicine in enhancing the global health, however, it also creates justice and fairness issues in the public health context. This has been the case thus requiring policies and international cooperation in efforts for a proper distribution of genomic medicine.

Comparison with Previous Studies

According to the research conclusions of this study, some findings support the previous findings in the corresponding areas of genomic medicine which displays its advantages and disadvantages in public health. Of the many themes identified through the literature, one is the opportunity for genomic medicine to transform disease diagnosis and treatment based on healthcare individualization. Meyer et al. (2020) called attention to the fact that genomic medicine means that patients receive individualised treatment that enhances the efficacy of therapies by focusing on the patients' genotypes. Along these lines, this study explores how genomic profiling in oncology can inform treatment choices, a point that has been well made by Dunbar et al. (2021), who provided analyses that show that personalized cancer genetics has contributed to enhanced survival rates. Two studies embrace the view of personalized medicine but unlike here these reviews only emphasis on cancer and drug areas but other areas like cardiovascular and preventive medicine also have greater potential for genomic medicine.

As for the area of preventive health care, the present research supports the observations of Lappalainen & MacArthur (2021), who elucidated how genetic testing for conditions associated with diseases such as breast and ovarian cancer can provide valuable information to reduce further disease impact and optimise patient results. In contrast with previous papers that highlighted various particular diseases, this review can offer a wider vision on how, using the genomic data, the early detection of different diseases is possible. this review builds on research

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by Schloss et al. (2020) which reviewed the application of genomic surveillance in containing infectious diseases. Stressing the role of genomic medicine within the global health agenda, this study draws the attention to the contrast between the genomic strategies used during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Threats of genomic medicine, in particular privacy and ethical issues, are widely covered in the present-day literature. Concisely, the findings of this review are in line with Cohen et al. (2021) & Zhang (2021) who discuss genetic discrimination and the need to protect genomic data. This paper discusses such apprehensions further, by focusing on the demand for enhancing privacy that should follow even greater regulation and sound ethical standards regarding discrimination in employment, insurance, and other fields. It also puts into focus the issues of polysemy of genetic information that earlier discussions have paid less attention to, but which are critical in applying genomic medicine appropriately (Baverstock, 2021).

The economic and social effects of genomic medicine have been discussed less often in the previous work; however, this review cross-references the work of Petrovick et al. (2020) who pointed out on the high costs that associated with the transition to the implementation of genomic medicine in the healthcare systems. This review extends that discussion in two ways by exploring the issue of equity and genomic technologies detailed below: Inequitable access to genomic technologies The use of genomic technologies in LMICs, particularly those with limited resources, poses significant potential risks in deepening health inequities. Prior research has examined the ability of genomics to enhance health in developed societies but, this systematic review claims the urgency of international cooperation and specific strategic interventions with an aim of enhancing genomic developments in the less developed societies.

The current study also strengthens and enriches prior research by synthesizing extensive existing knowledge about the benefits and concerns of genomic medicine for public health. Finally, this review also draws a broader focus on the application of genomic medicine and the associated ethical, economic, and social issues that will predominate the future of public health systems.

Conclusion

Genomic medicine is one of the promising areas that can revolutionize and enhance the future practice of public health as it creates the foundation for delivering individualised treatments on a large scale, strengthen the approaches for prevention and control of diseases, and improve the outcomes of healthcare services. However, translating genomics into healthcare systems have had its own set of problems. The erosion of the right to privacy and genetic discrimination, the financial implications of broad uptake, and the uncertain science of genetic information are still concrete threats. However, inequality in genomic medicine can worsen the problems associated with health disparity hence the significant development of a fair method to cater for all types of populace. Given such risks arising from the continued development of genomic technologies, such measures need to be put in place so that genomic medicine is appropriately harnessed for public good and is not a problem in health systems.

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