

To Assess the Knowledge and Practice among Senior Citizens about Selected Geriatric Health Problem: A study

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Abstract

Ageing is a natural and an inevitable development phenomenon bringing along a number of changes in physical, psychological, hormonal and the social conditions. Health problems tend to increase with an advancing age and very often the problems appropriate due to neglect, poor socioeconomic status etc. A descriptive approach was chosen and 100 senior citizens were participated. The data was collected by structure questionnaire with an interview technique. The result revealed that out of 100 senior citizens 33(33%) were known hypertensive's, 13(13%) were hypertensive's but unaware the condition and 11(11%) had systolic hypertension. An overwhelming percentage (64%) of senior citizens had below average knowledge followed by 32%, 4% average knowledge and above average knowledge. Among known hypertensive's 36% were maintained blood pressure under control, and the rest 64% were had uncontrolled blood pressure. Finally the study was shown that the significant association between the knowledge on hypertension and selected demographic variables like gender, occupation, and education ($p < 0.01$). It is important to create a caring society with an emphasis to improve awareness on hypertension management and prevention of complication. Community based supportive services for elderly should be developed in partnership with public, private and family member of senior citizens.

Keywords: Geriatric Problem; Senior Citizens; Systolic Hypertension.

Background

The elderly are a precious asset for any country and their health and economic issues differ from those of the general population and vulnerable group in the society. In India the elderly account for 7% of the total population. By 2020, 10.4% of population accounting to 142 million people 60 years old age will be living in India [1].

The care of the elderly is drawing more and more attention of the government and public. The more of people with hypertension arise from 600 million in 1980 to nearly one billion in 2008. The prevalence is significantly higher in geriatric population.

Worldwide, raised blood pressure is estimated to cause 7.5 million deaths about 12.8% of total of annual deaths[2].

Hypertension is the commonest cardiovascular disorder positioning a major public health challenge to population in socio-economic and epidemiological transition. It is use of the major risk factor for cardiovascular disorder mortality which accounts for 20 – 60% of all deaths [3].

More recently Sir James Sterling Ross committed: you do not heal old age; you protect it, you promote it; you extend it. These are in fact the basic principles of preventive medicine. Chronic diseases like hypertension are more prevalent among older people than in younger people. The prevalence of hypertension and related complications including congestive heart failure, coronary artery diseases, stroke and end stage renal diseases rises sharply as a function of advancing age. The knowledge and

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health beliefs of individuals can play a critical role in blood pressure control [4].

This present study attempts to assess the knowledge and practice among senior citizens and hyper tension. This information may help shape health care policy, education and research aimed at reducing the adverse consequences of hypertension in older population.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To assess the prevalence of hypertension among senior citizens.
2. To assess the knowledge about hypertension among senior citizens.
3. To assess the practice of known hypertensive senior citizens.
4. To compare the knowledge of senior citizens with the selected demographic variables.

Methodology

A descriptive Research approach was adopted for the study.

Setting of the Study

The study was conducted in urban area, Tirupati, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh.

Sample Techniques

100 Senior citizens were selected based on non-probability purposive sampling.

Criteria for Selection of Sampling

Senior Citizens who are aged above 60 years both male and female who are willing to participate in the study.

Description of Tool

The Structured questionnaire was developed by using both closed and open ended questions. The questions are constructed, based on the personal experiences during interaction with senior citizens, and from review of literature and guidance from experts.

The questionnaire consists of 3 sections: Section-I, Section II, and Section III.

Section I : The Section-I consisted of socio-demographic data of the respondents such as age, gender, education, occupation and income and

family history and also included the Blood Pressure, measure for the respondent.

Section II: The Section-II questionnaire comprised

- i. General information about hypertension
- ii. Risk factors of hypertension
- iii. Signs and symptoms of hypertension
- iv. Prevention and control of hypertension
- v. Complications of hypertension

Section III: Questions related to practice area of the known hyper tensive senior citizens

Pilot Study

Pilot study was conducted on 10 subjects and reliability was computed by applying the split half method, using Karl Pearson Coefficient of correlation, it came out to be $r = 0.96$ and tool was highly reliable.

Results

Table 1: Prevalence of hypertension among senior citizens

S.No	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1	Known cases hypertensives	33	33%
2	New cases of hypertension	13	13%
3	Cases of systolic hypertensives	11	11%

Table 1 shows that out of 100 senior citizens the known hypertensives were 33 percent followed by 13 percent and 11 percent were new cases of hypertensions and cases of systolic hypertensions. The overall prevalence of hypertension among participants of the study was 57 percent which shows higher prevalence of hypertension among senior citizens.

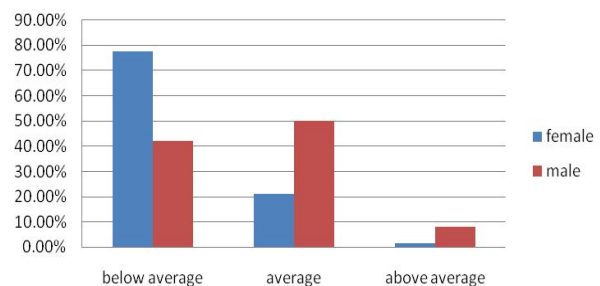


Fig. 1: Comparison of knowledge with gender

Revealed that the female respondents of study had poor knowledge 77.4%, when compared to their counter of part of male had 50% average knowledge on hypertension.

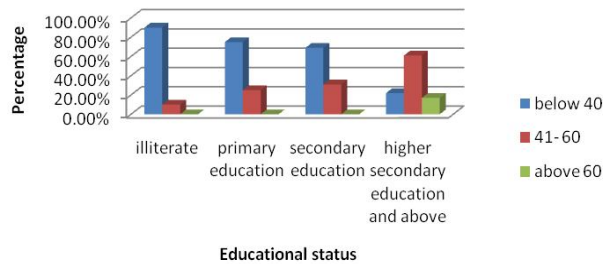


Fig. 2: Comparison of knowledge with education

Significance difference found with educational status. Higher educational status secondary education increased the level of knowledge. ($\chi^2 = 39.53$, $df = 10$, $p < 0.01$).

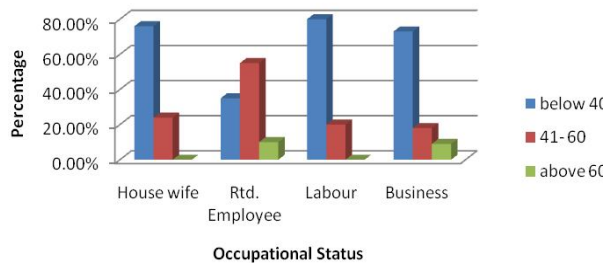


Fig. 3: Comparison of knowledge with occupation

Respondents of senior citizens as labor / housewife had poor knowledge when compare to Rtd. Employees and business holder. It is interesting to note that Rtd. Employees had good knowledge on hypertension ($\chi^2 = 18.57$, $df = 6$, $p < 0.01$).

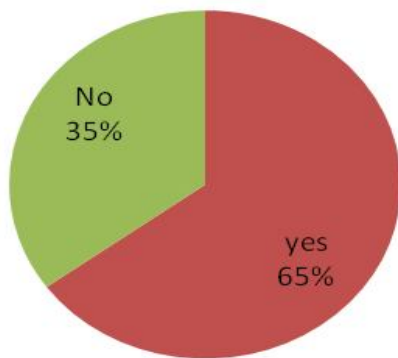


Fig. 4: Pie diagram on practice of known Hypertensive senior citizens

65% of respondents followed dietary restrictions and the rest are not bothering the dietary and other practice to control the hypertension.

Discussion

The present study revealed that there was a significant association between some of the demographic variables has gender ($p < 0.01$), occupation ($p < 0.01$) and education ($p < 0.01$).

Hence the framed hypothesis for this study was accepted that there is significant association between levels of knowledge with selected demographic variables of senior citizens.

The present was supported by a cross sectional analysis conducted by Janusz kaczorowski at UK reported 47 % (463/983) older people had poor awareness on hypertension and its related risk factors. Only 26.9 % (87/323) had good knowledge on hypertension and its risk factors.

Conclusion

Health in its concept signifies physical, mental, social and spiritual well being. As we all know the physical health remains one of the essential components, to sustain the physical health all aspects of it have to be taken care of. Decline in physical and mental ability is generally associated with advanced age. High blood pressure is a manifestation of structural and physiological abnormalities of cardiovascular system and the prevalence of hypertension rises as the population grows older. The pur pose of the study was to assess the knowledge and practice among senior citizens about hypertension.

Limitations of the study

- ✓ The scope of the study was limited to only senior citizens.
- ✓ The study was limited to only one urban area of selected location.
- ✓ Findings of the study cannot be generalized as the size of the sample is small.
- ✓ The study limited to socio - demographic factors namely gender, age, religion, education, occupation, income, type of family.
- ✓ The determined blood pressure for the study participants in the present study were based on the average of two measurement of blood pressure taken during single visit only.

Implications

The findings of the study have implications in the field of nursing practice, nursing education, nursing administration and nursing research.

Nursing practice

- Nursing professionals working in the community set up should educate regarding awareness on

hypertension among senior citizens to enhance their quality of life.

- Nursing professionals need to play a vital role to create awareness about lifestyle modifications for older people to control their blood pressure and other clinical disorders.

Nursing education

- As a nurse educator there are plenty of opportunities for nursing teachers to educate the general public and family members of the senior citizens regarding care taking, prevention of complications about cardiovascular disorder.
- The study emphasis significance of short term education program for caretakers of the elderly people at home set up.

Nursing administration

- Nursing administration can take part in developing inflammation booklet / needs on hypertension and its controlling methods.
- A strategic lifestyle modifications and methods can be educated on hypertension related problems.
- Nursing administration can mobilize the available resources planned towards conducting health talk on geriatric health problems for family members of senior citizens, so that the care takers of senior citizens also will be educated and helps in maintaining the health of senior citizens.
- The nursing administration should plays and organizes health campaign on geriatric health problems and its control for senior citizens.
- The nursing administrator should explore their practice.

Nursing research

- This study helps nursing researchers to educate the senior citizens or older age group on age related health problems and its controlling

measures in community settings according to their demographic, socioeconomic and political characteristics.

- Nurses should come forward to carryout studies on awareness program on geriatric health problems and publish them for the benefit of public and nursing fraternity. The public and private agencies should also encourage research in this field through materials and funds.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study following recommendations have been made:

- A similar study can be replicated on large sample to generalize the findings.
- A quasi experimental study can be undertaken with a control group for effective comparison of the result.
- A study can be conducted by including additional demographic variables.
- A comparative study can be conducted between rural and urban settings.
- Manuals, self instruction module may be developed which is self exploratory and useful for geriatric group.

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