



Awareness on non communicable diseases (NCDs) among rural population of district Rajouri (J&K UT)

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Abstract

The lifestyles of rural residents of district Rajouri have changed from active farming based ones to sedentary ones. The data on non communicable diseases (NCDs) is still lacking from rural areas compared to urban ones. The present study was conducted so as to evaluate the knowledge on non communicable diseases (NCDs) among the rural population of district Rajouri. The results of the present study concludes that the rural population of the specified region had an average knowledge regarding non communicable diseases (NCDs) which can be improved by active participation of different stakeholders so as to create the awareness about the same. This shall not only improve the health of the people of the region but also reduce the burden on the health sector.

Keywords: communicable diseases, lifestyles of rural, (NCDs)

Introduction

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) being one of the major health care problem are the leading cause of death globally. The loss which is incurred due to the deaths by Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are not limited to the health but they are also pushing the people in poverty, reducing manpower efficiency as well as affecting the economy of the country.

Non-communicable disease is a long duration illness that emanates from genetic, physiological, environmental, and behavioral characteristics put together (WHO, 2018). NCDs such as Cardiovascular Diseases, diabetes, cancer, and other chronic respiratory diseases have been documented as the major cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide, for almost three decades (Habib and Saha, 2010, Horton, 2013, Nojilana *et al.*, 2016 and Solomons *et al.*, 2017) ^[2, 3, 4, 6].

Chronic NCDs were earlier considered a healthcare issue confined to mostly high income countries whereas infectious diseases are considered as problem of low income countries. This scenario has changed now as NCDs has been estimated at 70 % in middle income nations, and nearly 50% in countries with the lowest national incomes compared to a slight higher at 85% in industrialized nations (WHO, 2005). The major risk factors for non communicable diseases (NCDs) are sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy diet, smoking, tobacco products and alcohol abuse, a sedentary lifestyle, and an unhealthy diet. If these could be addressed adequately, 40–50% of non-communicable disease-related, premature deaths are preventable (Taylor, 2010) ^[8]. Keeping in view the above mentioned facts, the present research is therefore planned to know the awareness among the rural population of district Rajouri so that Non-communicable diseases can be prevented.

Materials and methods

This questionnaire based study was conducted among rural population of district Rajouri. The questionnaire was prepared and 108 respondents were randomly selected from various educational backgrounds and gender. After obtaining permission from respondents, the purpose of the study was explained to the respondents and then the

questionnaire was distributed only to the willing participants. The questionnaire consisted of questions regarding personal data of the respondents, including their qualifications, gender, their awareness on Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and its risk factors as well as preventive measures. The responses from the respondents were collected and the results were analyzed.

Results and discussions

Data of 108 individuals was collected for the study. Respondents were predominately females (56.3 %). As far as the educational background of the respondents was concerned, majority (51.1%) of them were college going students. Among the respondents, 16.7 percent were unaware or haven't heard of Non-communicable diseases (NCDs). About 34 percent of the respondents were unaware that NCDs are not transmissible. Responses for the awareness regarding some common non-communicable diseases were also collected during the study. 27.1 percent of the respondents were unaware of Diabetes while 22.9 percent respondents were unaware of hypertension. 25 percent didn't know about cancer. 29.2 percent respondents were unaware about obesity. 47.9 percent of the respondents were unaware about Osteoarthritis. 20.8 percent respondents did not know about heart attack. 31.3 percent respondents didn't know anything about stroke.

Among the causative agents of NCDs, Smoking was identified as risk factor for NCDs by 66.7 respondents while the remaining 33.3 percent respondents said that smoking doesn't cause NCDs. 36.9 percent respondents said that Alcohol doesn't cause NCDs. According to 46.6 percent dietary habits have no effect on NCDs. 35.65 percent respondents believe that Sedentary life style cause NCDs. 44.7percent respondents were unaware of the fact that High salt intake cause NCDs.

35.4 percent respondents were unaware that Control of body weight is important to prevent NCDs. 31.9 percent respondents didn't know about Childhood obesity and malnutrition cause NCDs. 41.3 percent don't know that increasing age cause NCDs. 25.5 percent don't think that green leafy vegetables should be added in diet. 29.8 percent

were unaware that fruit intake can prevent NCDs. 34 percent said that avoiding excess salt intake don't prevent NCDs. 29.2 percent respondents don't have any idea that avoiding tobacco and alcohol prevent NCDs. 32.6 percent don't know that daily physical activity prevent NCDs. 27.1 percent respondents were unaware that avoiding junk food prevent NCDs. 34 percent respondents don't think that think meditation help in preventing NCDs. 33.3 percent respondents don't think that change in life style can prevent occurrence of NCDs. 33.3 percent were unaware that regular medication is important in treatment of NCDs.

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) represent the iceberg phenomenon of the diseases transmission in which large percentage of the problem is unreported which can be brought out only by means of community based surveys. Recent field studies of Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are gaining a lot of importance particularly during the last few decades. The spreading of Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in different areas of the world irrespective of their socio-economic status is posing a lot of burden on the health infrastructure of the world. 16.7 percent respondents were unaware or haven't heard of Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) while about 34 percent of the respondents were unaware that NCDs are not transmissible. Similar findings were also reported in other studies (Peer *et al.*, 2013, Baldwin *et al.*, 2013 and Spires *et al.*, 2016) [5, 1, 7]. Although several studies have examined the awareness and opinion about Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) risk factors, this is the first study that explored the knowledge in the study area. This study showed that the participants had a little knowledge about Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) which may act as a great hindrance in the prevention of Non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Conclusion

In the conclusion, it can be inferred from the present study that awareness of NCD among the respondents is relatively low. The study further recommends that health department should conduct various visits in rural communities for the tactical delivery of health education particularly awareness about the NCDs. Moreover, lifestyle changes and dietary modifications should also be promoted among them.

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