The awareness levels, attitude and perception of people about diabetes

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Introduction

The British South-Asian people show poor level of knowledge in diabetes and have been discouraged to join educational sessions (1). These clear findings have resulted from a descriptive randomized control trial conducted by Hawthorne (1) in order to evaluate the effect of health education on the control of blood glucose level and knowledge of diabetes in British-Pakistani women with type 2 diabetes mellitus. This investigation was carried out during 6 months. Two hundred people participated in this study. Interview questionnaires were asked to complete to the participants and also their blood samples were taken for measurement of HbA1c level at the beginning and the end of study. Topic guide was used for the focus group discussion and questions related to diabetic diet, diabetic complications, monitoring glucose level and services provided by diabetic clinics. Results of this investigation indicated, a significant change in knowledge and improvement in glycaemic control in intervention group. Men showed more improvement than women. Also literate women showed more improvement than illiterate women. Similarly, a qualitative study conducted in order to discover the experience and attitudes of primary care diabetic patients residing in a UK South-Asian community with most of the patients of Indian origin (2). Semi-structured interviews were carried out on the participants. The participants were recruited from two general practitioner practices in Leicester. The study involved 20 diabetic patients. 15 South-Asians (6 men and 9 women) and 5 Caucasians (3 men and 2 women) with one patient with type 1 diabetes and 19 type 2 diabetic patients. Results of the study indicated that, the South-Asian patients faced problems regarding diet aspect and showed little learning regarding diabetes, and were discouraged to join educational sessions. Strong family provide emotional support for participants, especially, patients who are native in South-Asia. South-Asian community seems to be at risk of health related anxiety and depressive illness as these participants were found to consult less frequently for anxiety and depressive. The study agreed with this as these participants were found to consult less frequently for anxiety and depressive illness.

Results of the study indicated that diabetes-related distress and psychological problems are common among people with diabetes (2,3). The study suggested that many involved providers in the study were aware of the diabetes related psychological problems but did not have their self-confidence to evaluate these problems and to support these patients.
A study conducted to explore the awareness level and attitude of general practitioners regarding to impaired glucose tolerance in this study. The 26 (18 male and 8 female) general practitioners were recruited for focus groups from primary care centres in North-East of England. Eight participants (6 men, 2 women) were selected from a health authority for the semi structured interview (4). Before each focus group and semi structured interviews, participants completed a questionnaire that made to evaluate their knowledge of the clinical significance and prevalence of impaired glucose tolerance. The results of the study indicated that 16 out of 34 (47%) participants have not being aware of the risk of impaired glucose tolerance, leading to type 2 diabetes, and 21 participants have not being aware of the high risk of cardiovascular disease with impaired glucose tolerance. In addition, about 50% of the participants have no idea of number of patient with pre-diabetic hyperglycemia registered with their practice, and 13 participants predicted the prevalence of pre-diabetic hyperglycaemia to be less than 1%. Also, the general practitioners were uncertain about managing and following up of these patients. Similarly Henderson et al (5), conducted a retrospective cohort study with the aim to determine incidence of hypoglycaemia during the preceding year in people with insulin-treated type 2 diabetes, and to determine how much low awareness of hypoglycemia have importance in these patients. A total of 215 people attending outpatient clinic of department of diabetes, royal infirmary of Edinburgh, were included in this study. 157 (73%) of them had experienced hypoglycemia since commencing insulin, the frequency of which increased with duration of diabetes and of insulin therapy.

**Conclusion**

Of the 157 people with a history of hypoglycemia, only the 13 (8%) individuals have history of decreased awareness of hypoglycemia, had experienced a nine-fold higher incidence of severe hypoglycemia than those with normal awareness. Thirty-two individuals (nearly 15%) had experienced 60 episodes of severe hypoglycemia, while hypoglycemia incidence for the entire groups were estimated 0.28 episodes/ patient/year. Mild and severe hypoglycemia were seen less frequently in insulin-treated type 2 diabetes than have been reported previously in type 1 diabetes, the risk of hypoglycemia had positive relation with duration of diabetes and insulin therapy. Although impaired awareness of hypoglycemia was uncommon, it was associated with a higher incidence of severe hypoglycemia.

**Authors’ contribution**
The authors contributed to the manuscript equally.

**Conflicts of interest**
The authors declared no competing interests.

**Ethical considerations**
Ethical issues (including plagiarism, data fabrication, double publication) have been completely observed by the authors.

**Funding/Support**
None.

**References**