

A Study of Knowledge and Attitude toward Tuberculosis among Tuberculosis patients seeking help in diagnostic and treatment centers, Kabul Province in Afghanistan in 2014

Abstract

Background: The study aimed to explore the knowledge and attitude of adult pulmonary Tuberculosis Patients toward tuberculosis in Kabul province of Afghanistan in 2014. Tuberculosis patient's knowledge and attitude towards TB disease are a crucial element for TB control. Appropriate knowledge of the patients towards TB and its management is a prerequisite are the pillars of success in TB control programme.

Methodology: The approach adopted for this study was cross-sectional, simple random sampling method, face to face interview with adult male and female pulmonary tuberculosis positive patients (aged +15 year) in Kabul province of Afghanistan. The total sample size was 285.

Result: The general awareness about TB was high in both genders and in both areas rural and urban (around 81.8%). TB was perceived widely as dangerous (57.2%) by the tuberculosis patients in both gender and in living area. A misperception that 'TB is a disease of female' was also observed in this province (76.5%). Though the knowledge on symptom suggestive of TB (chronic cough) was high (95.4%), they lacked knowledge on other associated symptoms of TB. Knowledge on microbiological cause of TB was (55.8%). The knowledge on transmission through germs present in air droplets expelled in the cough was comprehensive and varied by rural to urban and in gender, in total 53% they answer positive to this question. Knowledge on diagnostic test was high (92%), but when to test sputum was (88.8%). Knowledge on TB can cure was high (78.2%). Respondents had also high knowledge on management of TB (e.g., patients should be helped with TB medicines for free). Knowledge on other cases of TB which require Long time treatment was poor (e.g., MDR- TB/ XDR- TB). Tendency to seek care from government facilities for TB treatment was high (62.1%) in Afghanistan despite TB services offered free at government health facilities. The answer for question, why you selected public or private clinic was comprehensive and varied by living area and gender. Seeking treatment from some where else was high (90.9%). But form private was higher than public clinic it was (66%) of respondent they seeking care from private practitioner. TB patients in both areas and genders work over taking TB treatment. Besides, financial problem, shame and fear of isolation were found to be important deterrents in accessing to TB care. Misconception about the discrimination of both gender of tuberculosis patients in community was high (83.5%), especially discrimination of women was (61.9%). The patient had good conception about that should people with TB disclose their illness to other people (72.6%). Patients had misconception about the understanding of their diseases. There conception was good about informing other members of your family or your friends (90.9%). 64.9% of the patients not thinking about that which they have Tuberculosis.

Conclusion: Continuous efforts still need to be given to enrich the knowledge of patients to control TB most effectively. Stability and long-term commitments by the international community are also required. The cross sectional study revealed that although knowledge regarding symptoms and etiology was acceptable however there is still a great need to educate females and illiterate individuals on priority basis. The mass media and IEC should actively continue giving message about importance of early detection and early treatment of Positive Pulmonary tuberculosis patients. A social support network (SSN) should be established within the community to support the TB patients to overcome the barriers.

Key words: Pulmonary tuberculosis, Knowledge, Attitude, Kabul and Afghanistan.

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