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Knowledge on Prevention and Early Detection of Thyroid Conditions among Women Attending Selected Outpatient Departments of a Selected Hospital

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ABSTRACT:

Thyroid disorders are the most common among all other endocrine disorders. Thyroid disorders are more prevalent among women in India and due to lack of awareness it is not easily detected. The main aim of the study was to assess the knowledge on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions among women attending selected outpatient departments of PSG hospitals, Coimbatore. The objectives of the study is to assess the level of knowledge on thyroid conditions among women attending selected OPDs and to associate between the knowledge level of women on thyroid conditions with their selected demographic variables. A descriptive design was used in the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 80 women attending selected outpatient departments of PSG Hospitals. Data was collected using a semi structured knowledge questionnaire for assessing the level of knowledge regarding prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions. Inferential and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Out of 80 samples 59% have inadequate knowledge regarding prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions, followed by 41% with moderately adequate knowledge and none of them had adequate knowledge. There was a significant association of the level of knowledge of women on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions with selected demographic variables like age, marital status, educational status, occupation, religion and awareness about thyroid conditions.($p < 0.05$ level).

KEY WORDS: Thyroid conditions, semi structured knowledge questionnaire.

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INTRODUCTION:

Thyroid hormones are produced by the thyroid gland. This gland is located at the base of the neck on both the sides of lower part of the larynx and upper part of the trachea. The gland wraps around the windpipe (trachea) and has a shape that is similar to a butterfly formed by two wings (lobe) and attached by a middle part (isthmus).

Puberty, pregnancy, and menopause place increased demand upon thyroid hormone function. The dietary habits, stress and genetic predisposition is identified as the major cause of thyroid disorder. An estimated 42 million people in India suffer from endocrine and metabolic disorder.

Thyroid disorders are the most common among all endocrine diseases in India. Thyroid disorders are more frequent in women. Worldwide the most common cause of thyroid disease is iodine deficiency. Statistics suggest that 1 in 50 women and 1 in 1000 men will develop symptoms of thyroid out of 42 million people who suffer with thyroid problems in India. Hashimoto's thyroiditis is the most common cause of thyroid disease in the United States.

Thyroid disorders are the most common among all other endocrine disorders. This disorder increases the risk of abortion, premature delivery and still births in many developing countries. At least 8% of women will have thyroid dysfunction following pregnancy. The thyroid disorder when left untreated, it can raise cholesterol levels and make the patient more likely to have a stroke, serious heart problems, brittle bones, risk of abortion, premature delivery and still birth .

An article published in Times of India highlights 1 in 10 Indians suffer from thyroid disorders in India. According to a survey, the disease is more prevalent among women than men. Regarding this, doctors say since symptoms of thyroid are often similar to other disorders, diagnosis is important. However, the survey revealed only 50%, of those know that there are diagnostic tests for detection of the disease.

There is a significant need for us to reach out and make people aware of the causes, symptoms, treatment and importance of testing for thyroid problems. Women are a key audience because there is a higher incidence of thyroid disorders amongst women than men. The women of child bearing age during period from planning for a baby or once they are pregnant must make sure that their thyroid functions are normal. It is clear that thyroid disorders are more prevalent among women in India and due to lack of awareness it is not easily detected. Hence the investigator feels that this study would help the patients to gain knowledge on prevention and early detection of thyroid disorders and control the development of thyroid disorders at an early stage.

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION:

OBJECTIVES:

- To assess the level of knowledge on thyroid conditions among women attending selected OPDs.
- To find out the association between the knowledge level of women on thyroid conditions with their selected demographic variables.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive design was used to assess the knowledge on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions among women. Purposive sampling technique was adapted to select 80 women who are above the age of 20 yrs attending gynecology and endocrinology OPD and willing to participate in the study as study participants. Women who are a known case of thyroid disorder are excluded from the study. The present study was conducted in the area of endocrinology and gynecology OPD of PSG hospitals, Coimbatore. The sample's knowledge was assessed by a semi structured questionnaire. A pamphlet on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions was distributed. The study was approved by IHEC and informed consent was obtained from all the participants of the study.

TOOL

A semi structured questionnaire was used to collect the baseline data. This tool consists of two sections. Section A deals with demographic data which includes sample number, age, sex, educational status, income, occupation, locality etc. Section B consist of 20 multiple choice question to assess the knowledge of thyroid disorders.

RESULTS:

The significant findings of the study:

Table 1: Women's level of knowledge on thyroid conditions

(n=80)

S.No	Range of scores	Level of knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
1.	<50	Inadequate	47	59
2.	51-75	Moderately adequate	33	41
3.	76 and above	Adequate	-	-

Table 1 reveals that, out of 80 samples 59% have inadequate knowledge regarding Prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions, followed by 41% with moderately adequate knowledge and none of them had adequate knowledge.

Table 2: Association of the knowledge on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions among women with selected demographic variables

(n=80)

S.No	Demographic variables	Level of knowledge			Calculated value	Tabulated value
		Inadequate	Moderate	Adequate		
1.	Age(in years)					
	a)21-30	25	23	-		
	b)31-40	08	04	-	2.47	2.45*
	c)41-50	04	01	-		
	d)51-60	10	05	-		
2.	Marital status					
	a)Single	03	-	-		
	b)Married	37	33	-	7.96	2.45*
	c)Widow	03	-	-		
	d)Separated	04	-	-		
3.	Educational status					
	a)Illiterate	02	-	-		
	b)Elementary	09	02	-		
	c)Higher secondary	15	17	-	5.58	2.45*
	d)Graduate	20	15	-		
4.	Occupation					
	a) Unemployed	26	1	-		
	b) Daily wages	11	02	-		
	c) Government	02	01	-	4.68	2.45*
	d)Private	08	09	-		
5.	Family monthly income					
	a)<5000	10	05	-		
	b)5001-10000	20	15	-	0.46	2.78 (NS)
	c) >100	17	13	-		
6.	Locality					
	a) Urban	29	27	-	3.71	4.30 (NS)
	b) Rural	18	06	-		
7.	Religion					
	a) Hindu	42	30	-		
	b) Christian	03	-	-	2.86	2.45 *
	c) Muslim	04	01	-		
	d) Others	-	-	-		
8.	Dietary pattern					
	a) Vegetarian	14	12	-	0.37	4.30 (NS)
	b) Non vegetarian	33	21	-		
9.	Awareness about thyroid condition:					
	a) Yes	18	23	-	7.62	4.30*
	b) No	29	10	-		
10.	Family history thyroid disorder					
	a) Yes	2	2	-	0.11	4.30 (NS)
	b) No	45	31	-		

Note: Statistically Significant- * P<0.05, NS- Non Significant.

Table 2 shows that there was a significant association of the knowledge on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions with selected demographic variables like age, marital status, educational status, occupation, religion and awareness of women about thyroid conditions.

DISCUSSION

The present study implies that 59% of women have inadequate knowledge regarding prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions followed by 41% with moderately adequate knowledge and none of them had adequate knowledge. A similar study was done to assess the knowledge regarding Iodine deficiency disorders among the tribal's in car Nicobar¹. All the village heads of the sixteen villages and people were examined for goiter. The study reveals that no one had correct knowledge of the cause of goiter.

This is in consistent with our study findings as none of the women had adequate knowledge on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions.

The study findings showed that there is a significant association of knowledge on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions with their selected demographic variables like age, marital status, educational status, occupation, religion and awareness of women about thyroid conditions. A similar study was conducted to assess health information –seeking behavior and hypothyroid knowledge among south Indian hypothyroid patients at Saveetha medical college, Chennai². In this study, marital status, education level, annual household income and health literacy were significantly associated with level of knowledge, whereas, age, gender, household location and occupation have no association with level of knowledge.

This is in consistent with our study findings as marital status, education and awareness about thyroid conditions were significantly associated with level of knowledge. In contrast to this study, in our study there is a significant association of level of knowledge with age, occupation and no association between monthly income and level of knowledge

CONCLUSION:

The study was conducted to assess the knowledge on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions among women attending selected OPD's of PSG Hospitals, Coimbatore. The study findings showed that about more than 50% of women had inadequate knowledge on prevention and early detection of thyroid conditions. This gave an insight to the investigator that more awareness need to be imparted to the women population to prevent complications of thyroid conditions like still birth, abortion, premature delivery and prevent undesirable outcome in neonates.

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