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Research Article

**KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE STUDIES IN HEART FAILURE
PATIENTS TOWARDS MEDICAL INFORMATION**

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Abstract:

Objective: The main purpose of study was to explore patients' knowledge about heart failure and their attitudes toward medical information given by healthcare providers. **Methodology:** A qualitative study was conducted at Nishtar hospital Multan, Pakistan. Semi structured interviews of 50 patients with various stages of chronic heart failure were conducted. Patients belongs to different age groups ranging 40-80years old. Data was analyzed through SPSS software. **Results:** Numerous patients had only a partial understanding of their disease, whereas a few fully understand their disease condition. Some of them having poor knowledge and showed indifferent behavior. The majority did not request prognostic information, while some of them wanted it. **Conclusion:** Patients having lower knowledge about heart failure could not be able to understand the information given to them. Awareness seminars should be conducted to educate patient about disease and importance of prognostic information.

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INTRODUCTION:

Cardiac disease (CD) inflicts a major health burden worldwide in both men and women[1].Patients suffering from heart failure have an insufficient knowledge about their medical condition and its treatment. They are unable to understand the instruction, measures and precautions advised by the physicians[2, 3]. By increasing the level of understanding among patients affected by the disease, a lot can be gained.

Educational programs that have been fruitful regarding improvement of knowledge among the participating patients. They have led to increased health and adherence to therapeutic regimen and a decreased need for hospitalization [4, 5].

In order to properly managing patients with heart failure, factors which optimize the communication between professionals and patients needed to be considered and the reasons behind why some of the patients do not embrace or request information should be clarified. For example, a patient with reduced cognitive capacity due to the disease or other factors, believes that the physicians and nurses are reluctant to deliver certain information, or feel that they are incompetent to ask[6].

The main purpose of study was to explore patients' knowledge about heart failure and their attitudes toward medical information given by healthcare providers.

METHODOLOGY:**Study setting:**

A qualitative study was conducted at Nishtar hospital Multan, Pakistan during the month of September 2019. Total 50 patients suffering from different stages of chronic heart failure were interviewed. 40-80years old patients were included in study. Informed consent was obtained from the participants.

Study design:

A semi structured qualitative interview was used to collect data containing 6 questions (open-ended). Questions were asked in local language of patients for their convenience, later their answers translated into required study language (English or Urdu).

The questions were the following:

- 1) Do you know about your disease cause?
- 2) Have you been given medical information about your disease by healthcare providers of hospital?
- 3) What is your opinion about given medical information?
- 4) What kind of information is missing?
- 5) What is your attitude towards receiving this information?

Throughout interview patients were encouraged to answer freely and also talk about their issues which they faced. Some patients were unable to understand questions and feeling embarrassed to answer. They were asked about information given them about disease. Whole interview was tape recorded.

Analysis:

Data was analyzed through SPSS software.

RESULTS:

Total 50 patients (35 men and 15 women) of 40-80 years old, participated in study.

Knowledge

Few (n=9) patients fully understand the disease condition and they have concerned towards the medical information given them, in order to improve their condition. While majority of them (n=27) did not know exact cause of disease and underlying conditions related to it. Some patients (n=6) believes that their blood coagulated or become concentrated due to warm environment, whereas remaining's opinion (n=8) was that medical information is not necessary, only medicine can treat their condition as given in table 1.

Table 1. Knowledge towards medical information

Factors	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Patients understand disease condition	9	18%
Did not know cause of disease	27	54%
Warm environment coagulate their blood	6	12%
Medical information is not necessary	8	16%

Attitudes**a) Reasons for not wanting medical information:**

There are following four reasons for not wanting medical information.

- 1) Patients think that knowledge cannot change the fact, they will die sooner or later.
- 2) Some patient's think that information deprive their hope of living joyful life without fear of death.
- 3) They don't want to be anxious because they think things would be worse if I worried.
- 4) Older age patients shows indifferent attitude. They don't want to receive any kind of information because they have stronger believe that they have spent autumn of their lives and death is on the way.

b) Reasons for wanting medical information:

There are following reasons for wanting medical information.

- 1) Patients think it's their right to be informed about prognostic information and they also respect that. Health care providers inform them quietly without giving stress to them.
- 2) According to a few patients opinion they can handle thing in a write way (including practical life work and economical things) after receiving prognostic information. Because it's their right to know whether their condition would be worse or not in future or they want to have idea of "how long I can live".

CONCLUSIONS:

Four main conclusion can be drawn from the study.

- 1) Not all the patients wanted to receive the information.
- 2) Patients having lower knowledge about heart failure could not be able to understand the information given to them.

- 3) There is an apprehension between patient's satisfaction and knowledge because patient cannot correlate their symptoms to the heart failure associated with other diseases leading toward death.
- 4) Awareness seminars should be conducted to educate patient about disease.

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