

PRIORITY AREA 11: GERIATRIC HEALTH

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Community Screening for Pseudo Exfoliation Syndrome (2003)

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Background

Like any other primary open angle glaucoma, glaucoma with pseudo-exfoliation syndrome too goes unnoticed until the last stage when one becomes completely blind. So, it would be logical to detect this disease in the community at the earliest so as to minimize and prevent the visual loss. Conducting a population based screening camps for high-risk groups would be one of the best ways to do so. Therefore, a study was designed to screen the pockets of gurun community against the control group of non-gurun community.

Methods

This survey followed an analytical, cross-sectional design. A village of Ghandruk at Kaski district (case) and Khopasi of Kavre district (control) were taken purposively as study areas. 350 individuals in each group who were 30 years and above were screened. All data were fed into the computer and data analysis was done with the help of the Oracle 9 i and front end developer 2000.

Results

Thirty four of them were found to have pseudo-exfoliation syndrome with or without glaucoma that accounted for 10.21% of total sampled population. Out of 34 cases, 10 of them had associated glaucoma and 11 of others had independent glaucoma accounting for 3.30% of total. Apart from them, 19 (5.71%) individuals were suspected to have primary open angle glaucoma and 12 (3.60%) primary angle closure suspects. Out of 34 cases having pseudo-exfoliation, 33 of them belonged to a single ethnic group "The Gurungs" and only one of them was Brahmin. In contrary, only 1.38% of the total screened population had glaucoma in Khopasi and 0.8% of the population was suspected to have primary open angle glaucoma. Pseudo-

exfoliation was seen more frequently in male than in the females accounting for 64.7% of total.

Conclusions

Pseudo-exfoliation syndrome was more prevalent among Gurungs than other ethnic groups. This disease predominantly affected males.

Keywords: ethnic group; glaucoma; pseudo-exfoliation syndrome; screening.

Pseudoexfoliation Syndrome: A Comparative Study of Prevalence among the Gurungs of High Altitude and Low Lands and Gurungs versus Tamangs and Sherpas (2003)

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Background

As per recently available data from a community survey of Pseudoexfoliation syndrome it was found that Gurungs were affected more frequently than other ethnic groups. The question that arose was whether Gurungs are at higher risk of developing Pseudoexfoliation by virtue of them being Gurung or by living at higher altitude needed to be answered. Furthermore whether only Gurungs or other ethnic people similar to Gurungs are also affected by disease needed to be addressed. To address these issues, a community base survey was thus conducted.

Methods

This survey followed a descriptive, cross-sectional community based design. A total of 1400 individuals who were 30 years or above were enrolled using convenience sampling.

Results

The survey showed that pseudoexfoliation syndrome irrespective of where they lived affected all Gurungs. Almost 8% of Gurungs were affected by this disease. This disease did not affect Sherpas and 0.3% of Tamangs did have pseudoexfoliation.

Conclusions

Pseudoexfoliation syndrome is more prevalent among Gurungs than any other ethnic groups. Being Gurung is a risk factor for the development of this disease, it is not the altitude that determines the risk.

Keywords: ethnic groups; gurungs; high altitude; lowlands; Pseudoexfoliation syndrome; sherpas.

Quality of Life in Elderly People - A Comparative Study in Different Elderly Homes of Kathmandu (2004)

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Background

In Nepal elderly population has always been considered passive recipients of support. Their choices, their satisfaction and their subjective perception towards their quality of life, their psychological problems etc have always been undermined. This study was carried out to identify the factors affecting the quality of life and the level of satisfaction in the inmates of one government run, one community operated and one private housing for the elderly in Kathmandu.

Methods

The design is of a cross-sectional comparative study. 30% of the inmates from each housing were taken by stratified systematic sampling. The tools of data collection included observation using a checklist and photography, interviewing the caretakers and management staff with an interview guide and structured interview of the inmates with a performed questionnaire. No statistical test of significance was performed due to the extremely small number of sampling frame.

Results

The respondents felt very good or at least better than at home in all the 3 housing facilities. 7 out of 24 responding males and 8 of 37 females at Pashupati and 2 of 8 inmates at Matatirtha found their room to be very congested and very cold in winter, and rightly so. Only 3 males and 6 females at Pashupati found the environment to be unhygienic, else most found it satisfactory though none found it excellent. When asked about outing, most inmates at Pashupati and Matatirtha used to go out once in more than 3 months while 4 of 24 males, 8 of 37 females and 3 of 5 inmates at Koteshwor said that they never do go out for outing. Almost none used to go out more than once in a month. Only 6 male (of 24 who responded)

inmates at Pashupati replied that they are engaged in household activities. The females, including 8(of 37) at Pashupati and 6(of 8) at Matatirtha were involved in making wicks for traditional lights. Many inmates in Pashupati used to have regular contact with the nurse for minor ailments. But there was no provision of regular periodic health checkup as such in place Only 2 males and 2 females in Pashupati and 2 at Matatirtha expressed dissatisfaction with the services. In Koteswor, an inmate was complaining that they rarely get any checkup and only when the inmates got moribund were the managerial members called.

Conclusions

Community run elderly housing charity committees in as many village development committees as possible is needed to address the problem of homeless and abandoned elderly people.

Keywords: elderly people; factors; problems; quality of life; satisfaction level.

Impact of Self Educational Intervention on the Health Practice of Elderly in Selected Areas of Kathmandu District (2005)

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Background

An interventional research project on elderly people in relation to their self health care practice was conducted in three selected areas of Kathmandu district.

Methods

The study consisted of two phases. The first phase was to conduct health camp. Following the health camp the second phase of the study started with the preparation of research tools and their pretest among 10% of elderly in Maharajgunj area. Using purposive sampling techniques elderly people who were of the age above 60 years and who agreed to volunteer for the pre, post and interventional study were selected. Major health problems and self health care practices were identified following health care package was developed and intervened. There were 38 elderly in Thapathali area, 40 and 41 in Pashupati and Chabel respectively selected for the study.

Results

The majority of the respondents (84%) had problems related to joints and bones. Although the post test result was not significant ($p=0.56$), the use of backrest while sitting or standing and stretching legs while sitting during post test changed significantly. The highest significant result in the post test were seen in the problems related to gastric and insomnia ($p=0.0001$). The most significant changes were seen in dietary habit of taking vegetarian diet instead of non vegetarian and in restricting the habit of bending down unnecessarily ($p<0.0001$). Similarly in recreational habits, significant results were seen in the daily and weekly visits of temples and relatives and in doing social work. The daily exercise habits during post test were significantly increased after the implementation of the educational package ($P\leq 0.001$).

Regarding personal hygiene habits, increase number of elderly started brushing their teeth at night and after each meal during post test ($p \leq 0.001$). There was significant increase in the number of elderly bathing by cleaning the skin folds with soap and water after the educational intervention.

Conclusions

Majority of the respondents lack nutritious diet. There was slight change after the intervention but not up to the satisfactory level. The respondents lack motivation towards change and needed consistent reinforcement.

Keywords: change; elderly people; health practice; health problems; impact; intervention; self educational.

Social and Health Status of Elderly Population in Far-Western Region (2009)

Bhatta R

Background

In Nepal, the older population is increasing both in terms of absolute numbers and as a proportion of the total population, i.e. there were 1.6 million elderly inhabitants, which constitute 7.46% of the total population in 2001, which is estimated to be double by 2017. This population is also regarded to be vulnerable as they suffer from the cumulative effects of a lifetime of deprivation, poor health and nutrition, low social status, discrimination and restriction on mobility, lack of means to fulfill their basic needs such as food, clothes, shelter, health care, love and affection. This study is thus designed to assess their social and health situation.

Methods

This is a descriptive/cross-sectional study and includes both qualitative as well as quantitative data. Three districts of far-western development region were selected randomly having one each from terai, hilly and mountainous area; Kanchanpur, Doti and Darchula respectively. From each district one VDC was randomly selected and out of the total ward of the VDC, one ward was randomly selected from where the all the population above the age of 60 years were taken for the study. A total 325 subjects were interviewed using this pre-tested questionnaire by the health personnel who were trained by the investigators. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed using the statistical package SPSS, Version 11.5 for Windows. Findings were described using proportions and percentage.

Results

The study showed that only 45% of the respondents were satisfied with the status of their living home. 44% of the respondents told that they don't had

any sources of income. Majority of the elderly peoples above 70 years told that they get the elderly allowance that is being provided by the government, but they are not getting it regularly. Only about 63% of the respondents were satisfied with their relation. The findings showed that only about 48% of the respondents were found to be satisfied with the daily food that they take. On the major health problems of the respondents that were identified among the respondents were eye problem (among 93%), dental problems (among 80%), digestive problem (54%), respiratory problems (among 45%), skeletal and muscular problems (among 46%), urinary problems (among 28%) and cardiovascular problem (among 19%). Although the existence of the problem was found to be at higher rate but it was found that only about 17% of respondents were having regular health checkup, which is considerably low. Study finding showed that 11% of the respondents were just confined to the bed due to the severity of problem. About 9% of them expressed that they were unable for washing, bathing and changing their cloths. Similarly 19% of the respondents expressed that they are unable to perform their usual activities and about 18% of the respondents expressed that they have extreme pain and discomfort. Study results showed that about 31% of the respondents were extremely anxious and depressed.

Conclusions

Elderly peoples have considerable health and social problems. In developing county like Nepal, it is necessary to develop senior citizen welfare program in such a way so that they can maintain their social and health status and develop the feeling of “senior” not “old and absolute”.

Keywords: ageing; care; elderly population; health status; problems; social status; support.