



PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT THE SPECIALITY OF ANAESTHESIOLOGY AND ROLE OF ANAESTHESIOLOGIST.

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ABSTRACT Anaesthesiologists are playing decisive role in patient management. Role of anaesthesiologist has extended beyond operating room to critical care, trauma centres, Pain Clinic, and as a member of resuscitation team⁵. Considering these, the present study was conducted to assess the people's knowledge about the role of anaesthesiologist in perioperative period and to educate people about anaesthesia. This observational study was conducted over a period of 4 months (15th Feb to 15th June 2017) in SMIMER Hospital Surat, Prior permission from ethical committee and a written informed consent from all patients and their relatives was taken. Four hundred and fifteen patients and their relatives aged between 16 to 70 years were included in the study. A questionnaire was filled by asking each question in vernacular language.

KEYWORDS : Public awareness, Anesthesiology, Anesthesiologist.

INTRODUCTION

Anesthesia has evolved immensely since the first anesthesia was administered publicly by W.T.G. Morton on 16th October 1846¹. The tremendous advances in anesthesia has made the most complex surgeries feasible and safe. Role of anesthesiologist has extended beyond operating room to critical care, trauma centers, pain clinic and as a member of resuscitation team. People in India have become aware about CPA (Consumer Protection Act 1986) but still they hardly have any knowledge about medical services specially related to operation theatre and anesthesia⁵. As the health care environment changed and specialty of anesthesiologist evolve, public at large has no knowledge and aware about the specialty⁹. The need and challenges for education and awareness about the specialty, has never been so great. The patients who undergone any kind of anesthesia, should know about anaesthesiologist and anaesthesia. Considering these, the present study was conducted to assess the people's knowledge about the role of anesthesiologist in peri-operative period and to educate people about anesthesia.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- People's perception and knowledge about anesthesia and anaesthesiologist.
- People's attitude towards options of anesthesia techniques and factors affecting the awareness by giving them questionnaires.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This observational study was conducted over a period of 4 months (15th Feb to 15th June 2017) in SMIMER Hospital Surat, Prior permission from ethical committee and a written informed consent from all patients and their relatives was taken. Four hundred and fifteen (415 – 270 males and 145 female) people aged between 16 to 70 years were included in the study. People aged more than 70 years and less than 16 years, patient with poor medical condition, mentally retarded and psychiatric patients were excluded from the study. The 15 questions were prepared in local language and given to the patient and their relatives. The questions were explained to illiterate peoples in local language. Interview was carried out by a team of selected anaesthesiologist.

The questionnaires were regarding people's knowledge about anaesthesiologist and their work, their fear regarding surgery and anesthesia, role of anaesthesiologist outside operation theatres and sources of knowledge. Percentage of patient giving answer was found out.

Chi square test, student 'T' test and Anova (Analysis of variance) were used to find out people's knowledge about anesthesia.

RESULTS

In our study out of 415 people about 61 % of the people's education was more than primary education, out of this only 21% of the people have knowledge about anaesthesia. Most of the people from our study don't know "what is anaesthesia" but most of the people knew that anaesthesia is essential for surgery. Anaesthesia is an art and science of

relieving pain during surgery, patients safety during anaesthesia is our priority but 60.5% of the people believed that anaesthesia is safe and 8 % of the people believed that it's not safe and rest of the people didn't know about the safety of anaesthesia.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of people included in the study

Sr. no.	Variables		Frequency	Percentage
1	Sex	Male	270	65%
		Female	145	35%
2	Age in years	<18	2	0.5%
		18 to 25	126	30.4%
		26 to 35	129	31.1%
		36 to 45	87	21%
		46 to 55	33	8%
	>55	38	9.2%	
3	Education	Illiterate	48	11.6%
		Primary	110	26.5%
		Secondary	166	40%
		Graduate	80	19.3%
	Post-graduate	11	2.7%	

Table 2: Knowledge of people regarding anaesthesia

Sr. no	Knowledge	Yes	No	Don't know
1	What is anaesthesia?	131 (31.6%)	204 (49.2%)	-
2	Is anaesthesia essential for surgery?	308 (74.2%)	37 (8.9%)	70 (16.9%)
3	Is anaesthesia safe?	251 (60.5%)	34 (8.2%)	130 (31.3%)
4	Are anaesthetists' qualified doctors?	201 (48.4%)	31 (7.5%)	183 (44.1%)
5	Is there any role of anaesthetist after surgery?	65 (15.7%)	131 (31.6%)	219 (52.8%)
6	Is there any role of anaesthetist outside the OT?	49 (11.8%)	125 (30.1%)	241 (58.1%)
7	Is there any role of anaesthetist in painless delivery?	43 (10.4%)	118 (28.4%)	254 (61.2%)

Table 3: Patients' Perception about "Who administers anaesthesia"

Sr. no.	Provider	Pts who had undergone surgery in the past	Pts who had not undergone surgery in the past	Total (415)	P value
1	Surgeon	35	26	61 (14.7%)	0.026
2	Anaesthetist	128	95	223 (53.7%)	
3	Nurse	37	33	70 (16.9%)	
4	Don't know	22	39	61 (14.7%)	

Above table shows that out of 415 people total 222 people had undergone Surgery in past out of it only 128 people about 57.6% knew that an anaesthetist give anaesthesia during surgery.

Figure 1: Perception of patients' regarding role of anaesthetist during operation

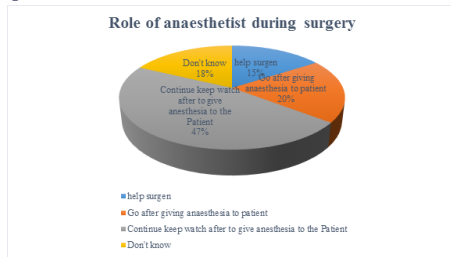
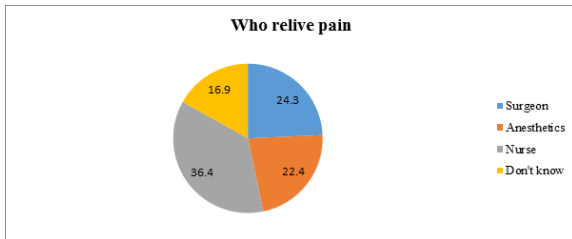
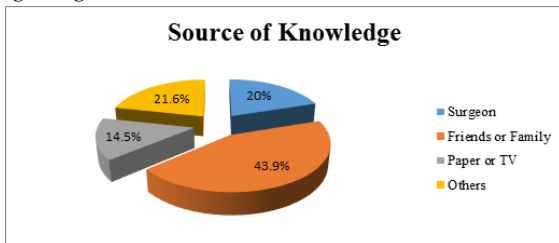


Figure 2: Perception of patients' regarding "who help the Patients to relive pain after surgery"



From above figure (no :2) we can say that out of 415 people only 93 people (22.4%) knew that anaesthetist play some role in postoperative pain management.

Figure 3: Perception of patients regarding "source for knowledge regarding anaesthesia"



Above graph shows the sources of knowledge about anaesthesia. Most of people had knowledge about anaesthesia by their friend or family and due to previous experience. But printed media and electronic media had little role in it (figure 3)

Table 4: Relation with knowledge of anaesthesia with different variable

Sr no	Variable	Group	Knowledge of anaesthesia	P value	
1	age		Yes	No	0.006 (Chi-square= 16.3)
		< 18	4	9	
		18 to 25	53	62	
		26 to 35	33	96	
		36 to 45	21	66	
		46 to 55	9	19	
	> 55	11	32		
2	Sex	Male	56	214	0.000 (Chi-square= 41.92)
		Female	75	70	
3	Education	Illiterate	7	41	0.000 (Chi-square= 37.17)
		Primary	24	86	
		Secondary	53	113	
		Graduate	37	43	

Out of 415 people 79% people were from 18-45 years of age, out of them only 32% had knowledge about anaesthesia. 20% male (out of 270) and 51% female (out of 145) knew about anaesthesia. Out of 415 people 246 (59%) people's educated (more than secondary education) out of it only 36% had knowledge about anaesthesia.

In our study we found that only 48.4% of the people knew that

anaesthetist are qualified doctors and 44.1 % people don't know about the qualification of anaesthetists. Only 15.7% of the people knew that anaesthetist have some role after surgery. It was extremely disappointing to note that more than 50% people were not aware about the role of anaesthetist outside operation theatre and in labour analgesia. 31.6% of the people answered that there is no role of anaesthetist after surgery and rest of the people didn't have any answer. 30.1% people believed that anaesthetist didn't play any role outside operation theatre. 58.1% people didn't knew the role of anaesthetist outside the operation theatre. Majority of the people in our study (61.2%) didn't know the role of anaesthetist in painless delivery. 53.7% of the patient knew that anaesthesia is administered by anaesthetist and majority of the people (36.4) in our study believed that, nurse help the patient to relive pain after surgery. Most of the people's source of knowledge regarding anaesthesia was friends and family.

DISCUSSION

Anaesthesia is a major supportive specialty which is essential for all the types of surgeries to be performed either diagnostic or therapeutic. But in general people the knowledge about the specialty anaesthesia is very less as compared to other medical and surgical specialty. We carried out this study to know about people's knowledge and perception about the specialty of anaesthesia and role of anaesthesiologist.

In our study, 31.6% knew about anaesthesiologist and 26% of people knew about anaesthesia in study by Dr. Khyati Pandya at al (2016) while in UK, study by Swine how and his colleague showed that 80% of the people knew about anaesthesia. This is because of poor education and lack of knowledge in our study population.

Regarding the knowledge of public about anaesthesiologist as qualified doctors, many previous studies shown that public have little or no knowledge regarding anaesthesia and anaesthesiologist. Our study showed that 48.4% people knew anaesthesiologist as qualified doctors where as other studies like M.G Irvin showed almost similar percentage of people's knowledge regarding the term anaesthesiologist but in Dr. Deepa Jathar et al (2002), there was little knowledge (38%) regarding the term anaesthesiologist.

MG Irwin et al (1998)⁷ found that 49.2% of the respondents believed that anaesthetists are fully trained doctors, 28.3% knew that anaesthetists are involved in labour analgesia. Most of the respondents had received knowledge about anaesthesia from surgeons.

Dr. Deepa Jathar et al (2002)³ observed that 42% of the patients from their study knew that anaesthetist supplement anaesthesia and only 38% patient knew that they were qualified doctors.

Udita Naithani et al (2007)⁹ observed that majority of the patients in their study felt that anaesthesia was necessary for surgery and 42.67% of the patient knew that anaesthesia is given by anaesthesiologist. Awareness regarding the role of anaesthesiologist outside the operation theatre was very low. Most of the patients were afraid of pain, awareness and death during surgery in preoperative period.

Dr Khyati Pandya et al (2016)⁵ found that the most common source of knowledge about anaesthesia was previous exposure from surgery and anaesthesia (84.61%). In our study 53.49% people had experience of anaesthesia in past, but when asked the question "who give anaesthesia?" "only 57.6% people knew that was anaesthetist – showing that past exposure to anaesthesia has not made any change in perception of anaesthesia. 11.53% persons in their study were believed that anaesthesiologist administered drug once and go away. Majority of them believed that anaesthesiologist monitored patient during intraoperative period only.

The people remember more about their surgeons than their anaesthesiologist. It may be because of the limited time anaesthesiologists spend with patients. In our study, surgeons and nurses played major role (60.7%) in post operative pain management as compared to anaesthesiologist (22.4%) while in Vijay Marulasiddappa and his colleagues studies showed only 5% of people knew the role of anaesthesiologist in intra and post operative pain management.

Vinay Marulasiddappa and H. N. Nethra (2017) observed that 48% of the participants from their study had no idea about the anaesthesia

despite of prior exposure to the surgery. 94 % of the participants had no any idea regarding the different types of anaesthesia. 12% of the participants knew that anaesthesiologist anaesthetize the patient and monitored them throughout the surgery. Only 5 % of the participants knew that anaesthesiologist relive pain during and after surgery.

CONCLUSION

Most of the patients in our study were not aware of the role of anaesthesia, types and techniques of anaesthesia, and the role of anaesthesiologists inside and outside OT. This can be achieved by spending more time in Preanesthetic Examination clinics, more interactions with patients and with the help of print, electronic media, public health meals and familiarizing themselves with the patients before surgery. Informed consent being a valid document, anaesthesiologist should take consent from the patient after verbally explaining all advantages and disadvantages.

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