



PREVALENCE OF HYPERTENSION AMONG RURAL POPULATION AND PERCEPTIONS ABOUT DISEASE AMONG HYPERTENSIVE CLIENTS IN A SELECTED RURAL COMMUNITY, CONTAI, PURBA MEDINIPUR, WEST BENGAL.

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ABSTRACT

A non-experimental descriptive study was conducted to assess the prevalence of hypertension among the rural population and perceptions about the disease among hypertensive clients in a selected rural community of Contai, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal. The objectives of the study were to determine the prevalence of hypertension and to assess perceptions related to hypertension among diagnosed hypertensive clients. A total of 120 samples were selected using the total enumeration technique from two villages, Chandpur and Radhanagar. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview schedule. The findings of the study revealed that 5% of the rural population was suffering from hypertension. The majority of the participants (24.17%) belonged to the age group of 40–45 years. Most of the participants perceived that antihypertensive medications cause side effects. Very few participants perceived that hypertension can cause severe complications and major health problems. The study also revealed that fewer participants believed that hypertension could be controlled through behavior modification and regular follow-up, and very few perceived that adherence to regular medication helps in controlling hypertension. The study findings showed a statistically significant relationship between perception of hypertension and selected variables such as age, medication adherence, diet, and exercise, as evident from the obtained correlation values ($r = 0.51, 0.54, 0.31$, and 0.34 respectively). The study concludes that misconceptions and negative perceptions regarding hypertension and its management exist among rural hypertensive clients, highlighting the need for targeted health education and community-based interventions to improve awareness, perception, and control of hypertension in rural areas.

KEYWORDS : hypertension, prevalence, perception, rural population.

INTRODUCTION

Hypertension is one of the most common non-communicable diseases and a leading public health challenge worldwide. It is a major risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, stroke, chronic kidney disease, and premature mortality. In India, the epidemiological transition from communicable to non-communicable diseases has led to a rapid rise in hypertension, not only in urban areas but increasingly in rural communities. Once considered a disease of affluence, hypertension is now widely prevalent among rural populations due to changing lifestyles, dietary patterns, reduced physical activity, tobacco and alcohol use, and population ageing.

Rural areas often face unique challenges in the prevention and control of hypertension. Limited access to health services, poor health literacy, irregular screening, and delayed diagnosis contribute to a large proportion of undetected and uncontrolled cases. Moreover, hypertension is frequently asymptomatic in its early stages, leading many individuals to underestimate its seriousness and delay seeking care. As a result, complications such as stroke and heart disease may occur before adequate treatment is initiated.

In addition to measuring prevalence, understanding how people perceive hypertension is crucial. Perceptions regarding the causes, severity, chronic nature, treatment, and lifestyle modifications significantly influence health-seeking behavior, medication adherence, and long-term disease control. Misconceptions such as viewing hypertension as a temporary condition, discontinuing medication once symptoms subside, or relying solely on home remedies can adversely affect outcomes. Cultural beliefs, social stigma, and economic constraints further shape these perceptions, particularly in rural settings.

Contai, Purba Medinipur, a predominantly rural district of West Bengal, represents a population undergoing rapid socio-economic and lifestyle changes. However, community-based data on the prevalence of hypertension and the perceptions of hypertensive clients in this region remain limited. Therefore, this study is needed to estimate the prevalence of hypertension among the rural population and to explore perceptions related to the disease among hypertensive clients. The findings will help in planning targeted health education, improving community awareness, and strengthening primary-level interventions for effective prevention and control of hypertension in rural communities.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Prevalence of Hypertension among rural population and perceptions about disease among Hypertensive clients in a selected rural community, Contai, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the prevalence of hypertension among rural population.
2. To identify the perception about disease among the diagnosed hypertensive persons.
3. To find out the relationship between perception of hypertension and selected sociodemographic variables.

ASSUMPTION

- Hypertension is prevalent among the rural population of Contai, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal, and a considerable proportion of individuals may be unaware of their hypertensive status.
- Rural adults have varying levels of knowledge and perceptions regarding hypertension, influenced by age, education, cultural beliefs, and access to health services.
- Community-based screening can help in early identification of previously undiagnosed cases of hypertension.
- Participants will provide honest and reliable information during interviews and cooperate during blood pressure measurement procedures.

DELIMITATION

- Irrespective of age and sex of hypertensive client.
- Clients who can read and write English and Bengali.
- hypertensive client in the selected rural community.

METHODS & MATERIALS

A Non experimental research approach, i.e Survey approach was selected for the present study.

The study was conducted at villages Chandpur and Radhanagar under Radhanagar sub center consisting 1200 & 2000 population respectively, Contai, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal. In this study, 120 sample was available Hypertensive clients of Chandpur and Radhanagar villages under Radhanagar sub center of Contai, Purba Medinipur district, West Bengal. was chosen as the sample by total enumeration technique. The tool consists of section I- Interview schedule on Prevalence of Hypertension, section II Part A- Background Information

Part B- Illness Profile and record analysis proforma & section III- Interview Schedule on perception regarding Hypertension.

Inclusion Criteria:

- People who are diagnosed with hypertension.
- People who are able to understand and communicate with Bengali & English.
- People who are willing to participate in this study.
- People who are available at the time of data collection.

Exclusion Criteria:

- People those are not interested in the study.
- People who are seriously ill.

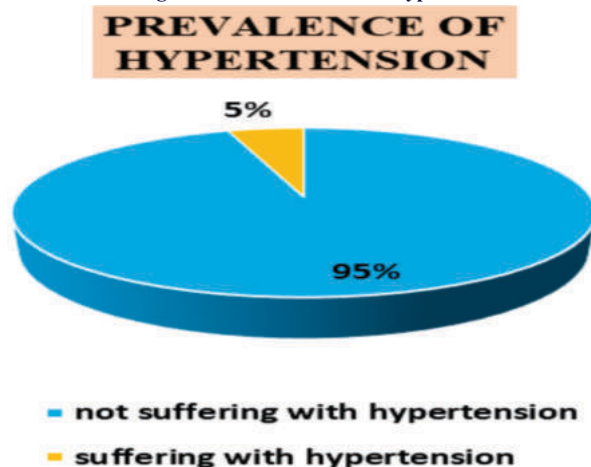
RESULT & DISCUSSION**Section I: Findings related to Prevalence of Hypertension.**

Figure 1 Percentage Of Prevalence Of Hypertension In Chandpur And Radhanagar Village.

The data given in the figure 1 shows that the 5% population of the Radhanagar & Chandpur village are suffering with Hypertension.

Section II: Findings related to sample Characteristics and illness profile of the sample.

The data presented in the table 4 shows that 24.17% of the participants are within the age group of 40-45 yrs, and 2.5% of the participants are above 75 years. 57.5% participants are male and 42.5% participants are female. The data further shows that 100% participants are belong to Hindu community. 73.33% participants are married & 1.67% are divorced. The data shows that 47.5% of the participants are home maker and 2.5% participants are employees work for govt sector for their livelihood. The data revealed that 30% participants have Rs above 2700/- per capita per month income and 20% of the participants have Rs 2200/-Rs 2700/- per capita per month income.

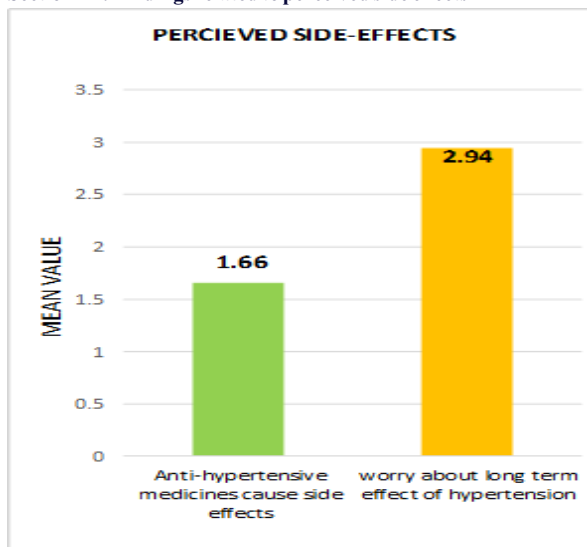
Section III: Findings related to perceived side effects

Figure 2 Mean Distribution Of Participants According To Perceived Side Effects.

The data shows in fig 2 that the mean value of item of side effects is low indicates that the participants are high perception about that anti-hypertensive medicine causing side effects.

NURSING IMPLICATIONS**1. Nursing Practice**

- Community health nurses can play a key role in early identification of hypertension through regular screening programs.
- Nurses should provide continuous health education to correct misconceptions about hypertension and its treatment.
- Emphasis should be given to medication adherence, lifestyle modification, diet control, regular exercise, and follow-up care.
- Counseling of patients and family members can help in preventing complications of hypertension.

2. Nursing Education

- Nursing curriculum should include updated knowledge on prevention and management of hypertension, especially in rural settings.
- Students should be trained to assess patients' perceptions and beliefs regarding chronic diseases.
- Educational programs should focus on communication skills and behavior change strategies.

3. Nursing Administration

- Nurse administrators should organize community awareness and screening programs for hypertension.
- Adequate facilities, manpower, and equipment should be ensured at primary health care centers.
- Policies should support continuous training of nurses in non-communicable disease management.

4. Nursing Research

- Further research is needed to explore perception-based interventions for hypertension control.
- Comparative and interventional studies can be conducted to improve outcomes among rural hypertensive populations.

CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that hypertension is present among the rural population, with a prevalence of 5% in the selected villages of Contai, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal. The findings highlight significant gaps in perceptions among hypertensive clients, particularly regarding disease control, medication adherence, lifestyle modification, and prevention of complications. Misconceptions related to side effects of antihypertensive drugs and limited understanding of the chronic nature of hypertension were evident. A significant relationship was found between perception of hypertension and factors such as age, medication, diet, and exercise. These findings emphasize the need for continuous community-based health education, regular screening, and counseling to improve perception, adherence, and effective management of hypertension in rural communities.

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