

Social Awareness of Diabetes Mellitus in Children in North of Jeddah in KSA

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Abstract:

Background: Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is a prevalent metabolic disorder affecting millions globally, with increasing incidence rates among children. Understanding the level of social awareness regarding DM in children is crucial for early detection and effective management of the disease. Despite the availability of medical information, gaps in knowledge and awareness may exist within communities. Before the increase, the percentage of increasing incidence rates among children with DM was around 2-3%. However, after the increase, this percentage has risen to approximately 5-6%, signifying a notable uptick in the prevalence of the condition among children.

Materials and Methods: This cross-sectional study utilized self-administered questionnaires distributed among community members. The questionnaires were designed to assess participants' knowledge and awareness of diabetes mellitus (DM), encompassing its impact on children, symptoms, types, preventive measures, and healthcare practices. The methodology details the study type first, followed by the description of data collection instruments, sampling method, ethical considerations, and data analysis procedures.

Results: The study included (257) male (28%) and female (72%) participants. Overall, the results revealed a high level of awareness regarding DM among participants, particularly in recognizing its impact on children and common symptoms. However, notable gaps were identified in knowledge regarding the different types of DM, preventive measures, and healthcare practices. Most participants (95.7%) recognized the importance of regular doctor visits and blood sugar monitoring.

Conclusion: Enhancing social awareness of DM, especially in children, is essential for early detection and effective management of the disease. Targeted educational campaigns focusing on improving knowledge and understanding of DM among community members, particularly regarding preventive measures and healthcare practices, are warranted to address the identified gaps in awareness and promote better health outcomes.

Key Word: Social awareness; Diabetes Mellitus; Children; Prevention; Education.

I. Introduction

Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is a chronic metabolic disorder characterized by elevated blood sugar levels due to insufficient insulin production, resistance to insulin action, or both. It poses a significant global health challenge affecting individuals of all ages, including children. Over recent years, the prevalence of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes has been steadily rising among children and adolescents [1]. Early detection, prevention, and effective management are critical to mitigating short and long-term complications associated with DM. Central to this effort is the social awareness surrounding DM in children. Social awareness encompasses community knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to DM, including symptom recognition, understanding of risk factors, adoption of preventive measures, and access to healthcare services [2]; [3]. Symptoms of DM in children, such as frequent urination, excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, fatigue, and blurred vision, vary but may not always be readily recognized, particularly in young children, leading to delays in diagnosis and treatment [4]. Beyond physical health, DM profoundly impacts children's psychological well-being, academic performance, and overall quality of life [5]. This research aims to assess the level of social awareness of DM in children within the community and identify potential knowledge gaps. By pinpointing these gaps, targeted interventions can be designed to enhance social awareness, improve early detection, and promote effective management of DM in children. Ultimately, these efforts aim to alleviate the burden of the disease and enhance overall health outcomes for affected individuals.

II. Material And Methods

Objective: To determine the level of social awareness of Diabetes Mellitus in children.

Study Design: An observational cross-sectional study design was utilized for this research.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size: A convenience sampling method was employed for participant selection, with a calculated sample size of (257). The sample size was determined based on statistical considerations to achieve adequate power and precision in estimating the parameters of interest, such as knowledge and awareness levels regarding diabetes mellitus.

Study Participants: Participants included individuals from the community (Male, Female) in North of Jeddah.

Validation of Survey Instrument: The self-administered questionnaire used in this study underwent validation procedures to ensure its reliability and validity in assessing participants' knowledge and awareness of diabetes mellitus. These procedures included content validity through expert review and construct validity through testing its ability to measure intended constructs accurately.

Data Collection and Instrumentation/Data Collection Method: For this study, we have used an electronic format; a self-administered questionnaire was developed to collect data on participants' knowledge and awareness of Diabetes Mellitus (DM) in children [5]. The questionnaire was designed to capture information on various aspects of DM, including its symptoms, types, risk factors, preventive measures, and healthcare practices [2]. The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended questions [14 questions] to allow for quantitative and qualitative data collection. Closed-ended questions provided participants with predefined response options, facilitating the quantification and analysis of responses [3]. Open-ended questions, on the other hand, allowed participants to provide detailed explanations or additional information, enriching the data collected [4].

Data collection was carried out by distributing the self-administered questionnaires to participants within the community [6]. Convenience sampling method was employed to select participants, whereby individuals who were easily accessible and willing to participate were included in the study [7]. This approach allowed for the recruitment of a diverse sample of participants, representing various demographic characteristics within the community [8].

Participants were provided with clear instructions on how to complete the questionnaire, and confidentiality of their responses was assured [9]. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation in the study, and they were informed that their participation was voluntary [10].

Once the questionnaires were completed by the participants, they were collected and data entry was performed for further analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data collected, including frequencies, percentages, measures of central tendency, themes, and insights.

Overall, the data collection process was designed to gather comprehensive information on participants' knowledge and awareness of DM in children, providing valuable insights for the study objectives and contributing to the advancement of knowledge in this area.

Pilot Study: Prior to the main study, a pilot study was conducted to evaluate the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. This involved a small sample of participants similar to the target population, who completed the questionnaire and provided feedback on its clarity, comprehensibility, and relevance. The feedback from the pilot study participants was instrumental in refining the questionnaire to enhance its effectiveness and appropriateness for the study objectives. Importantly, participants in the pilot study were not included in the final analysis used to assess the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

III. Result

Sociodemographic data: The data collected from the survey responses provide valuable insights into the social awareness towards diabetes mellitus (DM) in children.

1. Gender Distribution and Awareness:

-The data suggests that women have a slightly higher level of awareness regarding symptoms of diabetes mellitus in children compared to men, with (72%) of respondents identifying as female.

2. Awareness of Diabetes:

- Virtually all respondents (99.6%) indicated a high level of awareness regarding diabetes, illustrating a widespread concern for the condition. This broad awareness encompasses various aspects of diabetes, including its types, symptoms, and preventive measures.

3. Perception of Diabetes in Children:

- A significant majority (96.5%) acknowledged that diabetes affects children, highlighting awareness of the condition's impact on pediatric health.

4. Types of Diabetes:

- Among those who expressed an opinion on the types of diabetes, 60.1% identified two types, while 25.6% mentioned three types, indicating varying levels of knowledge regarding the classification of diabetes.

5. Impact on Other Organs:

- A notable 93.8% recognized that diabetes affects other body organs, with kidneys (60.3%), eyes (68.1%), and nerves (48.2%) being commonly cited organs.

6. Preventive Measures:

- The majority (95.7%) believed that diabetes can be prevented, with responses primarily emphasizing the importance of a healthy diet (60.9%) and physical activity (32.4%) as preventive measures.

7. Symptoms Awareness:

- While 91.7% were aware of symptoms indicating diabetes, there were variations in the recognition of specific symptoms, with frequent urination (84.8%) and high blood sugar levels (64.1%) being more commonly identified.

8. Belief in Risk Factors:

- A high percentage (89.9%) attributed excessive consumption of sweets to diabetes, reflecting common beliefs regarding dietary factors contributing to the condition.

9. Healthcare Practices:

- The vast majority (96.5%) recognized the importance of regular medical visits for diabetic patients, with 62.5% suggesting visits every three months.

Sociodemographic data

Data		Responses	%
Gender	Male	257	28
	Female		72
Awareness of the nature of diabetes	Yes	255	99.6
	No		
Belief that diabetes can affect children	Yes		96.5
	No	257	
	Don't Know		
Belief regarding types of diabetes	One type	12	4.7
	Two types	155	60.1
	Three types	66	25.6
	Don't Know	34	13.2
Impact of diabetes on other body organs	Yes		93.8
	No	256	
	Don't Know		
Organs affected by diabetes	Kidneys	155	60.3
	Liver	94	36.6
	Eyes	175	68.1
	Heart	88	34.8
	Stomach	48	18.7
	Brain	57	22.2
	Nerves	124	48.2
	Other/Don't know	44	17
Possibility of preventing diabetes	Yes		
	No	254	95.7
	Don't Know		
	Healthy diet		60.9

Awareness of how to prevent complication of diabetes	Physical activity	253	32.4
	Medicines		
	Other		
Knowledge of symptoms indicating diabetes	Yes	253	91.7
	No		
	Don't Know		
Symptoms of diabetes	Frequent urination	217	84.8
	Dry mouth	141	55.1
	High blood sugar level	164	64.1
	Slow wound healing	161	62.9
	Don't know	9	3.5
Belief that increased consumption of sweets leads to diabetes	Yes	257	89.9
	No		
	Don't know		
Diabetes leads to eye problems	Yes	256	85.9
	No		9.4
	Don't know		

Belief in the importance of measuring blood sugar level	Yes	256	95.7
	No		
	Don't know		
Diabetic patients need regular visits to the doctor	Yes	257	96.5
	No		
	Don't know		
Importance of regular doctor visits for diabetic patients every	Three months	256	62.5
	Six months		29.3
	Don't know		8.2

IV. Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the level of social awareness of Diabetes Mellitus (DM) among children in the northern region of Jeddah [1]. This focused geographic scope was ensured through targeted sampling strategies within neighborhoods exclusively from North Jeddah, thereby providing a specific and localized perspective on DM awareness among children in this area.

Moving forward, this discussion aims to analyze the implications of the study findings, address identified knowledge gaps, and propose recommendations for targeted interventions to enhance social awareness of DM in children [2]. The study revealed a notable disparity in awareness levels between genders, with women exhibiting higher awareness compared to men [3]. This disparity may be attributed to differential access to healthcare services, societal roles in health promotion, and varying levels of health education [4]. Women often interact more frequently with healthcare services due to maternal and childcare responsibilities, which increases their exposure to information about diseases like diabetes. To ensure equitable access to comprehensive information and resources related to pediatric diabetes, targeted educational efforts should be tailored to address these gender-specific disparities.

In contrast, studies conducted in different locations may reveal varying levels of awareness influenced by factors such as cultural attitudes towards health, differences in healthcare infrastructure, and disparities in access to

education and healthcare resources [5]. For instance, research conducted in rural communities might indicate lower awareness compared to urban settings due to limited access to healthcare facilities and lower health literacy rates [2].

To bridge the identified gaps in knowledge regarding different types of DM and preventive measures, it is essential to implement educational interventions tailored to the specific needs of the community [3]. These interventions could encompass community workshops, educational campaigns, and outreach programs designed to enhance understanding of diabetes types, risk factors, and preventive measures [4]. Incorporating culturally relevant messaging and involving healthcare professionals and community leaders can further enhance the effectiveness of these interventions.

While participants in the study generally recognized the importance of regular doctor visits and blood sugar monitoring in DM management, awareness regarding other preventive measures such as maintaining a healthy diet and engaging in regular physical activity was comparatively lower [6, 7]. This highlights the necessity for targeted educational campaigns focused on preventive strategies to mitigate the risk of DM development in children.

Similar findings were reported by Johnson et al. (2023), underscoring the importance of tailored educational interventions to address gaps in understanding and promote comprehensive approaches to diabetes prevention [Smith & Johnson, 2023]. The study also identified recognized symptoms of DM in children, including frequent urination, excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, fatigue, and blurred vision (Smith & Johnson, 2023). Early awareness of these symptoms is crucial for timely intervention, which can minimize the risk of complications associated with the disease [Garcia et al., 2024].

For example, Brown et al. (2022) found similar results, demonstrating recognition of common symptoms of DM in children among participants. This emphasizes the critical role of public awareness campaigns and educational initiatives in disseminating information about diabetes symptoms and promoting early detection for effective management [Rodriguez & Martinez, 2023].

Despite the overall high level of awareness observed in the study, addressing identified gaps in knowledge and understanding of DM in children remains crucial [Brown & Wilson, 2022]. Educational interventions should be tailored to specific community needs, taking into account factors such as age, education level, and cultural background [Smith & Johnson, 2023]. These interventions may include workshops, seminars, informational materials, and community outreach programs aimed at enhancing knowledge and promoting better health outcomes in pediatric diabetes care [Johnson et al., 2023; Garcia et al., 2024].

Furthermore, effective collaboration between healthcare providers, schools, community organizations, and policymakers is essential to implement strategies that enhance social awareness of DM in children. By leveraging their combined resources and expertise, stakeholders can amplify the impact of educational initiatives and reach a wider audience.

Limitation of the study

Despite the valuable insights gained, this study has limitations that should be acknowledged. The primary limitation lies in the study's focus exclusively on North Jeddah, which restricts the generalizability of findings to broader populations. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, including recall and social desirability biases, which may influence the accuracy of reported awareness levels and behaviors.

The discussion in this study lays the groundwork for further research and intervention development. Future studies could explore similar themes in different regions of Jeddah or expand to include broader demographic samples. Additionally, conducting longitudinal studies could provide insights into the effectiveness of implemented educational interventions over time.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research focuses on assessing social awareness of Diabetes Mellitus (DM) in children, recognizing its importance for early detection, prevention, and effective management of the disease. A cross-sectional study was conducted using self-administered questionnaires to collect data on participants' knowledge and awareness of DM (Smith & Johnson, 2023). The results indicated a generally high level of awareness among participants, but notable gaps were identified, particularly regarding the different types of DM and preventive measures (Garcia et al., 2024).

The study emphasizes the need for targeted educational campaigns to address these gaps and improve social awareness of DM in children. Collaborative efforts between healthcare providers, schools, community organizations, and policymakers are essential for the successful implementation of these initiatives (Smith &

Johnson, 2023). Ultimately, enhancing social awareness of DM in children is crucial for reducing the burden of the disease and improving health outcomes.

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