

Behavioral risk factors for noncommunicable diseases in working and nonworking women of urban slums

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ABSTRACT

Background: Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are an emerging public health problem, accounting for 80% of deaths in low and middle-income countries leading to a global epidemic. The increasing burden of NCDs is affecting poor and disadvantaged women population disproportionately, contributing to widening health gaps between and within countries. Globalization and urbanization have led to lifestyle changes among urban poor, which need to be understood, as the urban areas are undergoing rapid transitions.

Objectives: To know prevalence and pattern of behavioral risk factors for NCDs in working and nonworking women of urban slums to initiate steps for preventive interventions.

Materials and Methods: This was community based cross-sectional study conducted among women of urban slums in the age-group of 30-45 years on a voluntary basis. Data were collected by the house-to-house survey using predesigned and pretested proforma World Health Organization-Stepwise Approach to Chronic Disease Risk Factor Surveillance (WHO-STEPS 1 and 2 questionnaires). Descriptive statistics and Chi-square test were used for analysis.

Results: Majority, 49% women were in the age-group of 30-35 years, with 60.5% belonging to Class IV socio-economic status. Stress was present in 38% working women as compared to 17% nonworking women ($\chi^2 = 22.12$, $df = 1$, $P < 0.0001$, HS). Nonworking women (25%) were less aware about common NCDs compared to (48%) working women ($\chi^2 = 22.82$, $df = 1$, $P < 0.0001$, HS). It was also found that 11% women were newly diagnosed with hypertension.

Conclusion: Most of the women were not aware of the risk factors leading to NCDs. Screening and IEC activities need to be strengthened and hence that diagnosis and preventive measures can be implemented at an early stage of life.

Key Words: Lifestyle, noncommunicable diseases, risk factors, urbanization, women

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