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Original Research Article

## Knowledge and attitude regarding epidural analgesia among expectant mothers

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Pain relief is an important issue for women in labour. Epidural analgesia provides safe and effective pain relief. But It has not been fully accepted and is not routinely practiced in most of the centres in developing countries despite of many advantages of this technique. Therefore, this study has been conducted with an objective to assess the knowledge and attitude regarding epidural analgesia among expectant mothers.

**Methods:** A descriptive study was conducted on 60 expectant mothers visiting antenatal OPD at DMC & Hospital, Ludhiana selected by convenience sampling technique. Knowledge assessed by using a structured questionnaire and attitude assessed by 3 point likert scale regarding epidural analgesia. Analysis was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

**Results:** The findings of the study revealed that 46.7% expectant mothers had below average level of knowledge, 35% had average level of knowledge and 18.3% had good level of knowledge. 96.7 % had positive attitude and only 3.3 % had negative attitude towards epidural analgesia. Correlation between knowledge with attitude was to be significant ( $r=0.609$ ;  $p=0.000$ ).

**Conclusions:** Thus, the study concluded that most of women had below average level of knowledge and but they showed positive attitude regarding epidural analgesia.

**Keywords:** Attitude, Expectant mothers, Epidural analgesia, Knowledge

### INTRODUCTION

In preeclampsia there is increased uteroplacental Pain relief is an important issue for woman in labour. Many labour analgesic strategies have been developed to reduce labour pain and make this experience as pleasant as possible.<sup>1</sup>

In modern delivery unit's analgesic and anaesthetic facilities are available 24 hourly and the use of epidural analgesia for labour may reach up to 60-80%.<sup>2</sup> Epidural analgesia is the most frequent used method of pain control. It offers advantages of providing relief from pain

while the parturient remains awake and able to participate and cooperate well in labour and delivery. It is preferred method for over 50% of hospitals in developed countries.<sup>3</sup>

Epidural analgesia is the technique capable of relieving pain satisfactory but it has not been fully accepted and is not routinely practiced in many centers in the developing countries.

The patients do not demand for it and the obstetricians are not keen to practice it in their daily routine for several reasons such as lack of services, lack of public awareness

about epidural analgesia benefits, cultural issues, socioeconomic issues and fear regarding complications of epidural analgesia.<sup>4</sup> Most of the parturient still suffer from the agony of labor pains due to lack of awareness, lack of availability or knowledge of availability of labor analgesia service.<sup>5</sup> The awareness level needs to be improved. With advancement in modern obstetrics and new trends coming up, mothers are keen to know about them. Hence, aim of study to assess the knowledge and attitude of expectant mothers regarding epidural analgesia.

## METHODS

Descriptive study was carried out on 60 expectant mothers attending the antenatal OPD of DMC and Hospital, Ludhiana over a period of 1 month. After taking informed consent 60 expectant mothers were selected by convenience sampling technique. Knowledge was assessed using structured questionnaire. Attitude was assessed using 3 point Likert scale consisted of 20 statements.

### Inclusion criteria

Expectant mothers who were in third trimester of pregnancy attending antenatal OPD of DMC and Hospital, Ludhiana, Punjab.

## RESULTS

The following data obtained from present study.

Majority of expectant mothers, 31 (52%) belonged to age group of 28-31 years, 19 (32%) in age group of 24-27 years, 5 (8%) in age-group of 20-23 years and other 5 (8%) in age-group of 32-35 years. Distribution of expectant mothers according to gravida, 33 (55%) subjects had gravida one, 23 (38%) had gravida second and few 4 (7%) had gravida three.

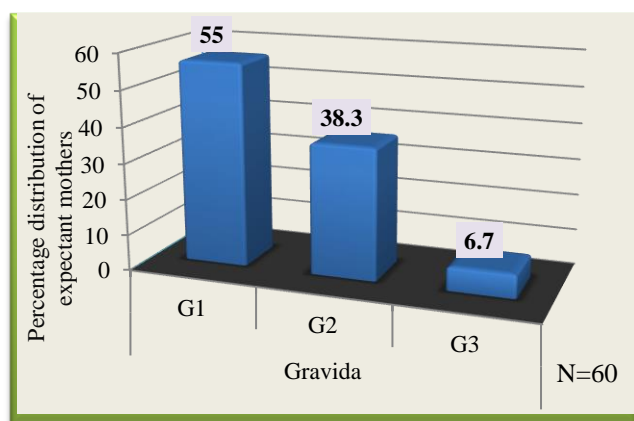


Figure 1: Distribution of expectant mothers according to gravida.

28 (46.7%) expectant mothers had below average level of knowledge, 21 (35%) had average level of knowledge and 11 (18.3%) had good level of knowledge regarding epidural analgesia. 96.7 % had positive attitude and only 3.3 % had negative attitude towards epidural analgesia.

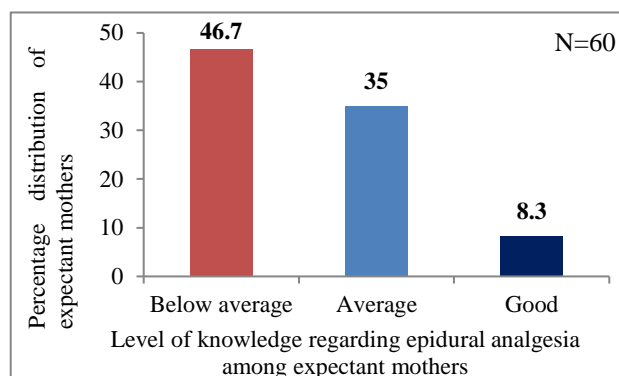


Figure 2: Reveals the percentage distribution of expectant mothers as per their level of knowledge regarding epidural analgesia.

Majority of women 96.7 % had positive attitude and only 3.3 % had negative attitude towards epidural analgesia.

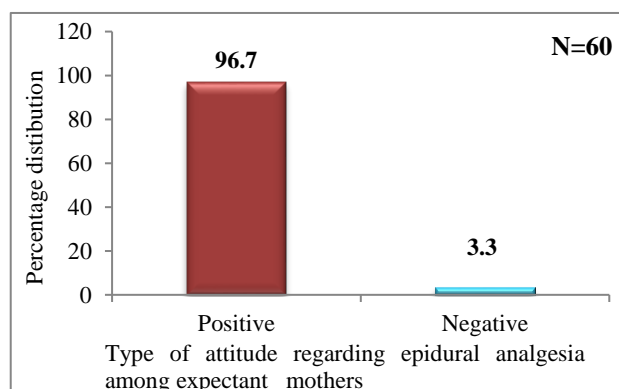


Figure 3: Reveals that 96.7 % had positive attitude i.e. showed willingness to opt epidural analgesia and only 3.3 % had negative attitude towards epidural analgesia.

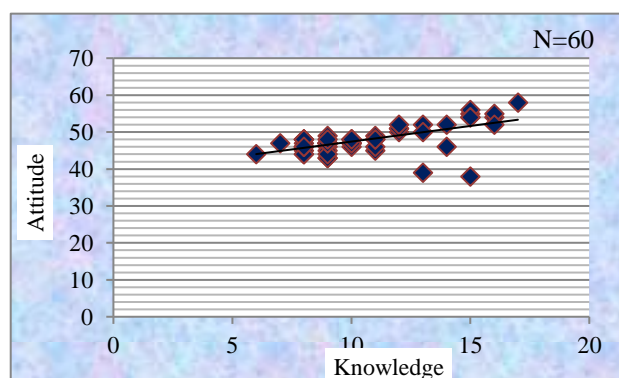


Figure 4: Scattered diagram shows moderate positive correlation (0.609) between knowledge and attitude.

The correlation was statistically tested ( $r=0.609$ ) and found to be significant ( $p= 0.001$ ). There was moderate positive correlation between knowledge with attitude. Hence, it can be concluded that there was positive effect of knowledge on attitude regarding epidural analgesia among expectant mothers. There was significant association of knowledge and attitude with education, occupation, habitat, previous knowledge regarding epidural analgesia, period of gestations at ( $p<0.05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

In the present study knowledge and attitude regarding epidural analgesia among expectant mothers was assessed. The findings revealed that out of 60 expectant mothers, 28 (46.7%) expectant mothers had below average, 21 (35%) had average and 11 (18.3%) had good level of knowledge regarding epidural analgesia. Similar study conducted by Kapadia Shital, Parmar Kartikeya, Solanki Nilesh and Patadia Kavita showed that 95% patients were totally unaware of the concept of labor analgesia.<sup>6</sup>

96.7 % had positive attitude i.e. showed willingness to opt epidural analgesia during delivery and only 3.3 % had negative attitude towards epidural analgesia. Similar study conducted by Shidhaye RV, Galande Mandar, Bangal VB and Smita Joshi results showed that 69% expressed their firm willingness to get delivered without labour pains and out of them 26% were very much eager for it, 25% showed inclination for painless labour by saying that they may like it, while only 6% were not at all interested.<sup>5</sup> Moderate positive correlation ( $r=0.609$ ) between knowledge and attitude. A similar study conducted by Hanem F. Mohamed in Riyadh showed that there was a significant moderate correlation between knowledge and parity ( $r = 0.40$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), income ( $r= 0.39$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), education ( $r = 0.31$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and attitude ( $r = 0.31$ ,  $0.000$ ).<sup>4</sup> There was significant association of knowledge and attitude with education, occupation, habitat, previous heard about epidural analgesia ( $p<0.05$ ). A study conducted by Minhas MR, Rehana, Afshan Gauhar, Raheel Hafsa in Karachi revealed that there was significant association of knowledge and attitude with level of education and attended antenatal classes.<sup>7</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Most of expectant mothers had average level of knowledge but majority of had positive attitude. Most of the Indian parturient still suffer from the agony of labor pains due to lack of awareness, lack of availability or knowledge of availability of labor analgesia service. The

awareness level needs to be improved. For this purpose, evidence based information on epidural analgesia should be provided during antenatal period to improve knowledge and attitude regarding epidural analgesia.

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