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Prevalence of Disability in Previously Undetected Leprosy Cases: Results of a Population Survey in Two States of India

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Preferred Presentation Method: Oral only
Would you like to be considered for the Young Scientist Award?: No

Introduction: To assess the disability burden, in India, due to leprosy.

Methods: A survey was conducted using multistage cluster random sampling in 8 districts of India; 4 in U.P. (High endemic) and 4 in Haryana (low endemic) and 804534 persons were examined using physical examination. All the suspects by field staff were examined by PHC medical officers or district medical/leprosy officer to confirm diagnosis for treatment at nearby health facility. Prevalence per lakh is estimated and χ² test of significance was used to compare proportions.

Results: Survey suggested that prevalence of disability in Uttar Pradesh was 47.3 per 1 lakh population surveyed (96%CI:42.0-52.7) and varied from 83.2(95%CI: 66.8-99.7) in Badaun district to 18.6(13.1-24.2) in Mathura district. Similarly, prevalence of disability in Haryana was observed to be 16.8 per 1 lakh population surveyed (95%CI:13.6-20.1) and varied from 40.6(95%CI:26.3-54.9) in Krukshetra district to 2.0(1.5-2.5) in Mewat district. The disability rate among new leprosy cases detected was found to be 17.7% in Haryana and 15.2% in Uttar Pradesh. Maximum disability was found in hands and feet together (51.3%).

The prevalence of disability appeared to have increased by age (Figure 1), touching zero level at young age of under 10 years and then slowly increased to maximum of 34.4% in ages of beyond 60 years. The disability rate among males was 24.0% significantly higher (χ² =18.2, P<0.0001) than 7.0% among females, however, prevalence was not significantly different in rural comparing to urban areas (18.3% vs. 12.0%,χ² =2.3, P=0.13).In all, 31.9% female patients had disability. The Grade 2 disability alone among new leprosy cases was found to be much higher 10.7% (38/355) than 1.8% as reported in registered data of India 2008-09.

Conclusion: The study suggests that prevalence of disability per lakh population is found to be 31.9 (95%CI:27.7-36.3) in both states together.