Assessment of Risk Factors among Pulmonary Tuberculosis Patients

Authors
Dr Aashutosh Asati¹, Dr Shubhangi Nayak², Dr Manoj Indurkar³

¹Senior Resident Pulmonary Medicine Department, SSMC, Rewa
²Assistant Professor Community Medicine Department, SSMC, Rewa
³Professor and Head, Pulmonary Medicine Department SSMC Rewa

Corresponding Author
Dr Aashutosh Asati
Email: aashutoshasati20@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
INTRODUCTION: Tuberculosis is a chronic pulmonary disease causing high morbidity and mortality. It has multiple risk factors of which includes various host related and socio-demographic factors. HIV is considered the most powerful risk factor for the progression of TB infection to disease. The frequency of tuberculosis occurrence in patients of diabetes mellitus is reported to be 3-4 times than that in non-diabetics. Apart from these there are other underlying risk factors which compromise the immune status like malignancies, end-stage renal disease, chronic lung disease, malnutrition, and alcoholism. Apart from host related factors, many environmental and social risk factors have been reported to be involved in increased susceptibility of infection and progression of the disease.

OBJECTIVE: To assess various demographic, socioeconomic and clinical risk factors for pulmonary tuberculosis (PTB) patients.

MATERIAL AND METHODS: Total 117 patients of pulmonary tuberculosis were included in our study. Data regarding socio-demographic risk factors and presence of any existing co morbidities was collected.

RESULTS: Majority patients, were males (62%), from rural areas (59%), married (75%), in age group between 20-60 years (75%), below poverty line (61%), low educated, and labourers (37%). 7.6% were HIV infected, 10.2% patients had diabetes mellitus, 13.7% patients were using corticosteroids for treatment of other chronic illness, 26.4% patients were malnourished.

CONCLUSION: The present study reveals that various demographic, socioeconomic and clinical risk factors have a potential role in causation of pulmonary Tuberculosis, and hence prevention and timely management of these risk factors could be helpful to reduce the burden of disease.

KEY WORDS - Pulmonary Tuberculosis, Risk factors, co morbidities.

INTRODUCTION
Tuberculosis (TB) is a chronic pulmonary disease causing high morbidity and mortality since ancient times. India is the second-most populous country in the world but unfortunately, one fourth of the global incident TB cases occur in India annually. As per WHO Global TB Report, 2015, out of the estimated global annual incidence of 9.6 million TB cases, 2.2 million were estimated to have occurred in India. As per WHO, In India
mortality due to tuberculosis is 17 per lakh in 2012. In absolute numbers, mortality due to tuberculosis is 2.2 lakhs annually.\(^1\) TB is the most common HIV-related opportunistic infection, and HIV is considered the most powerful risk factor for the progression of TB infection to disease as it weakens the cell-mediated immunity and macrophage function.\(^2,3\) Apart from HIV infection there are other underlying risk factors which compromise the immune status. The frequency of tuberculosis occurrence in patients of diabetes mellitus (DM) is reported to be 3-4 times than that in non-diabetics. Some of the studies conducted in the west have shown that relative risk of tuberculosis is 2.0-3.6 times more than those without diabetes.\(^4\) Other disease states that increase the risk of developing tuberculosis are Hodgkin lymphoma, end-stage renal disease, chronic lung disease, malnutrition, and alcoholism.\(^5\) Apart from host related factors, many environmental and social risk factors have been reported to be involved in the increased susceptibility of infection and progression of the disease. Environmental and social factors reported include proximity of contact, crowding, indoor pollution and use of biofuels (especially in rural areas), housing conditions, living style, ethnicity, education and socio-economic status.\(^6,7,8\)

**OBJECTIVE**

To assess various demographic, socioeconomic and clinical risk factors for pulmonary tuberculosis (PTB) patients.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

This was a cross sectional study conducted in pulmonary medicine department SSMC Rewa. Total 117 patients of pulmonary tuberculosis diagnosed microbiologically or clinically were included in our study. Patient consent was taken and; data regarding socio-demographic risk factors like age, sex, residence, marital status, education, occupation, addiction and presence of any existing comorbidities such as HIV infection, DM, malignancy, etc and other common underlying risk factors like history of contact to a smear-positive PTB patient, chronic corticosteroid therapy, malnourishment, etc was collected. Data obtained was entered in Microsoft excel and frequency distribution tables were prepared.

**Table-1 Socio-Demographic Factors In Study Patients**

| Socio-Demographic Factors | No. Of Patients | Frequency (%) |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Age (in years)            |                 |               |
| <20                       | 05              | 04%           |
| 21–40                     | 42              | 36%           |
| 41–60                     | 46              | 39%           |
| >60                       | 24              | 21%           |
| Sex                       |                 |               |
| Male                      | 72              | 62%           |
| Female                    | 45              | 38%           |
| Residence                 |                 |               |
| Rural                     | 69              | 59%           |
| Urban                     | 48              | 41%           |
| Education                 |                 |               |
| Illiterate                | 29              | 25%           |
| Primary                   | 53              | 46%           |
| Secondary                 | 18              | 15%           |
| Tertiary                  | 17              | 14%           |
| Marital Status            |                 |               |
| Married                   | 88              | 75%           |
| Unmarried                 | 29              | 25%           |
| Occupation                |                 |               |
| Agricultural worker       | 16              | 14%           |
| Labourer                  | 43              | 37%           |
| Drivers                   | 05              | 04%           |
| Businessmen               | 06              | 05%           |
| Salaried service personnel| 06              | 05%           |
| Unemployed                | 41              | 35%           |
| Income below poverty line | 71              | 61%           |

**Table-2 Clinical Risk Factors For Pulmonary TB In Study Patients**

| Co morbidities and other risk factors | No. of patients | Frequency (%) |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| HIV infection                        | 09              | 7.8%          |
| Diabetes mellitus                    | 16              | 13.7%         |
| Chronic use of corticosteroid         | 11              | 9.4%          |
| Malignancy                           | 02              | 1.7%          |
| Chronic liver disease                | 04              | 3.4%          |
| Chronic kidney disease               | 03              | 2.5%          |
| History of contact with other pulmonary Tuberculosis patients | 19 | 16.2% |
| Malnourished                         | 31              | 26.4%         |
| Addiction                             | 32              | 27%           |
| Smoking                               | 24              | 20%           |

**RESULTS**

**Socio-demographic factors (Table-1)**

Out of total 117 study patients, 72 (62%) were males and 45 (38%) were females. Maximum number of pulmonary tuberculosis (PTB) patients were in age group between 40-60 years (n= 46) followed by age group between 20-40 years (n=42). Majority patients (n=69) were from rural areas, housing conditions, living style, ethnicity, education and socio-economic status.\(^6,7,8\)
Clinical risk factors (Table-2)
Among 117 PTB patients 9 (7.6%) were HIV infected, 12 (10.2%) patients had diabetes mellitus, 16 (13.7%) patients were using corticosteroids for treatment of other chronic illness, 31 (26.4%) patients were malnourished, 19 (16.2%) PTB patients had history of contact with other pulmonary tuberculosis patients, 4 (3.4%) patients had chronic liver disease, (2.5%) patients had chronic kidney disease, and 2 (1.7%) patients had malignancy. 32 (73%) patients were smokers and 28 (85%) patients were alcoholics.

DISCUSSION
In our study, about 75% patients were in 20-60 years age group and PTB was found to be more common among male gender (62%), married individuals (75%), in rural areas (59%) from low socio-economic group (61%). Similar findings were reported in other studies as well. Bhatia et al\(^9\) reported 76% male and 24% female patients in their study. Study conducted by Ali M et al\(^10\) and Dubey et al\(^11\) also showed that TB is most prevalent in rural area. Ali et al\(^10\) also reported that Tuberculosis was found to be more among married patients (64.63%) belonging to low socioeconomic strata. Similar finding were found by Dubey\(^11\) where 70% patients are married. Majority of patients were labourer (37%), followed by unemployed group (35%), 14% patients were agricultural workers in our study while in study by Gupta S\(^12\) found that PTB was significantly more common in blue-collar (44%) and white-collar (27.1%) workers than household workers (12.1%), students (10.6%) and retired / unemployed people (6.3%).

In our study, 7.6% patients were HIV infected similar to this, Hill et al\(^13\) and Gupta S et al\(^12\) showed HIV prevalence of 6.1% and 10.6% in TB patients respectively in their studies. In our study, 10.2% patients had diabetes mellitus whereas study by Srivatava AB et al\(^14\) and Raghuraman s et al\(^15\) reported the prevalence of diabetes in TB patients as 8.2% and 29% respectively. In our study, 26.4% patients were malnourished, while study by Dodor E\(^16\) and Dargie B\(^17\) found 51% 39.7 % TB patients were were malnourished. In our study, 13.7% patients were using corticosteroids for treatment of other chronic illness, 3.4% patients had chronic liver disease, 2.5% patients had chronic kidney disease, and 1.7% patients had malignancy. Study by Gupta S et al\(^12\) found malignancy (5.8%), chronic liver diseases (3.9%), history of contact with TB (3.4%), chronic corticosteroid therapy (2.9%), chronic kidney diseases and malnourishment (1.5%) among TB patients. 73% patients were smokers and 28 85% patients were alcoholics. Study by Khaliq A et al\(^18\) has also shown that TB was found to be significantly associated with male gender, married individuals, smoking, drinking, and illiteracy.

CONCLUSION
The present study reveals that various demographic, socioeconomic and clinical risk factors play a vital role in the etiology of pulmonary Tuberculosis. Most important factors found were young age group, male gender, low socioeconomic status, low education standard, exposure to TB infected patient, malnourishment, chronic use of corticosteroids, co-existing immuno-compromised diseases like HIV, DM, malignancy etc. Hence, this study provides useful information about the risk factors for Pulmonary TB that can be used to control the disease, by preventing these potential risk factors in population and timely diagnosing and providing treatment for pulmonary TB.
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