



Increasing Prevalence of Neck Pain among youngsters of Bangalore: An Alarming Shift

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ABSTRACT

Neck pain become a public health problem, its accelerating prevalence and devastating side effect is exerting substantial load on national's wealth; because its impact is more on productive population (adult working age people). Although it was a hospital based observational study; done for the intervention purpose. But here in this paper we are just mentioning its cross sectional perspective. Hence this study was carried out on patients attended NIUM hospital with a complaint of Neck pain. After getting ethical clearance from the Institutional Ethical Committee (IEC) patients were included in study. This study stretched from January 2011 to May 2011. A total 50 patients were admitted in the study; age group ranging from 20 to 59 years. In present study sample, patients from 20 years to 59 years were included and the 50 patients were distributed according to age with a class interval of 10 into four groups i.e., 20-29, 30-39, 40-49 and 50-59. Patients diagnosed with neck pain were included into the study. Maximum prevalence of neck pain was found in age group 30-39 years followed by 20-29, 40-49 and 50-59 years age group. Although it was a less sample study, but it shows prevalence of neck pain is more in younger age peoples (3rd to 4th decade of life); which is a new shift in prevalence of neck pain bearing with age.

Keywords: Cervical Pain, Cervical Spondylosis; Lifestyle Disease; Unani Medicine; *Wajaul Unuq.*

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INTRODUCTION

Pain is the unpleasant sensation in animal that is caused by actual or perceived injury to the body tissues and produces physical and emotional reactions. Presumably, pain sensation has evolved to protect our bodies from harm. Pain might be called a protector, a predictor, or simply a hassle. By definition neck pain or cervical pain is a non-specific symptom of discomfort in the neck.¹ It is pain experienced anywhere from the base of the skull at ear level to the upper part of the back or shoulders.

Neck Pain (NP) has a number of possible causes, depending on the causes; neck pain may be experienced as limited to the neck itself (localized) or as radiating to the shoulders and upper arm.¹ NP comes under the most frequent types of chronic pains.² NP can come from number of disorders and diseases of any tissue in the neck (anatomically neck is a complex organ; structurally it comprises of muscles, bones, nerves, vessels and various glands). NP is often accompanied by stiffness or difficult neck movements (restriction in neck movement).¹ Neck pain is a public health problem as it is disabling, its management is costly and is associated with substantial morbidity.^{3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18}

Neck pain and its bearing with Age

Various prevalence studies on neck pain done in past shows that neck pain is more prevalent in elderly population (maximum observed in 4th and 5th decade of their life) and gradually increase with advancement of age. Let's see them one by one;

According to Peter *et al*, neck pain is a common condition and the prevalence rises with age.⁶

Lifetime prevalence of neck pain was 71% and that between 12% and 34% of adult experienced neck pain annually.⁷ Neck pain prevalence increases with age.⁵ Mantyselka *et al*, neck pain is a common symptom among middle-aged population.⁸ Ostergren *et al*, pain from the shoulder and neck region now seems to occur more frequently, the prevalence of shoulder and neck pain is highest in 45-65 years age.¹²

Gordon studies reported the prevalence of cervical pain and stiffness between 9.5% and 71% of the population. One in every five patients who visit an orthopaedic practice suffers from a cervical syndrome and in the US and Japan, cervical pain syndrome is the second most common cause for consultation and hospitalization in pain clinic. Males exhibited a peak prevalence of waking cervical pain, stiffness and headache in the 40 to 59 years age group.¹⁹

A survey of general practice revealed that women accounted for 58% of neck pain, with a peak incidence between ages 40 to 49 years.^{20,21} Neck pain is a significant problem in elderly and rises

with the age. It is a common symptom among middle aged population and its prevalence is highest in 45 to 65 year age group.^{6,7,8,11,12,13,20,22,23,24,25,26}

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Present study was an observational study with a sample size of 50 patients and of 3 months duration. It was conducted at Regimental Therapy Unit (RTU) of Hospital, National Institute of Unani Medicine (NIUM). This study stretched from January 2011 to May 2011. After getting ethical clearance (Registration Number-07_U006_15668, 27-Apr-2010), clinically diagnosed cases of neck pain were included in the study. Patients diagnosed with neck pain were categorised arbitrary into four age groups i.e., 20-29 years, 30-39 years, 40-49 years and 50-59 years. The patients were informed about the procedure and verbal and written consent were taken from them before obtaining their details. Patients simply complaining of non specific neck pain were included in the study and those were having history of trauma and fracture (confirmed by X ray cervical spine) excluded from the study. Visual Analogue Scale were used to rate the severity of pain.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In present study sample, patients from 20 years to 59 years were included and the 50 patients were distributed according to age with a class interval of 10 into four groups i.e., 20-29, 30-39, 40-49 and 50-59. Patients diagnosed with neck pain were included into the study. Maximum prevalence of neck pain was found in age group 30-39 years followed by 20-29, 40-49 and 50-59 years age group. (See Table 1 and Figure.1)

Table 1: Distribution of Subjects according to Age (n=50), (n=total number of subject).

Age (in year)	No. of Subjects	Percentage (%)
20-29	16	32
30-39	19	38
40-49	9	18
50-59	6	12
Total	50	100

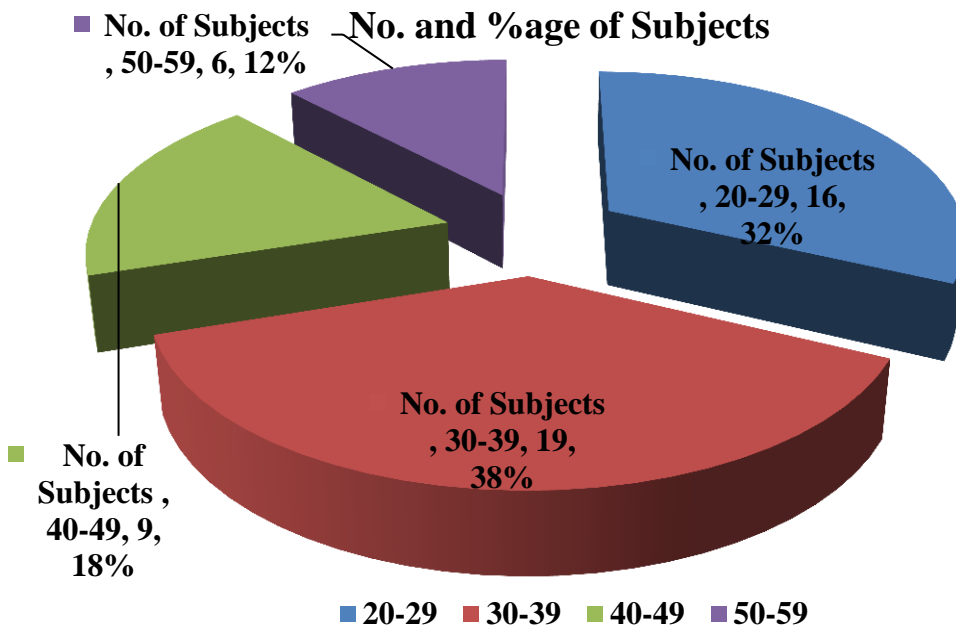


Figure 1: Distribution of Subjects according to Age (n=50), (n=total number of subject).

Discussion

In present study sample, patients from 20 to 59 years were included and the 50 patients were distributed into four groups i.e., 20-29, 30-39, 40-49 and 50-59. In each group there were 32%, 38%, 18% and 12% patients respectively as shown in table & figure no.1. From age wise distribution it was clear that the neck pain is more prevalent in age group 30-39 years (mean 35 years) and its prevalence decline steeply in 5th decade of life. In 3rd and 4th decade of life the prevalence of neck pain was found highest. The same has been documented in the study from Bangalore in which median age was found to be 27 years and it ranges between 18-50 years.²⁷ Our findings were in agreement with this study as present study was also conducted in Bangalore. In other studies higher prevalence of neck pain have been documented in elderly. 6,7,8,11,12,13,22,23,24,25, 28,29 But in some studies it has also been emphasized that neck pain prevalence is shifting towards the younger age group.³⁰

CONCLUSION

Finding of this study seeks more attention because results shows most of the population are getting affected by neck pain in their early decade of life; which is the most productive age of an individual. Study shows a change in dynamic trend among the patients coming NIUM with Neck Pain complaint; indicate that this shift may be due to the change in lifestyle and altered sitting posture being adopted by the younger age group.

Although it was a small scale study, so it gives only preliminary data; need field survey on big sample size to strengthen the above findings.

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