

# Knowledge, Attitude and Practice regarding Non-Communicable Diseases among Adults in Rural Andhra Pradesh

**Jakirhussain Shaik<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Himabindu Edara<sup>2</sup>, Prof. Saraswati Raju Iyer<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>B.Sc.(N), M.Sc.(N), M.A.(Sociology), M.Sc. (Psychology), PhD Scholar (Sociology)

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, M.S.B. College of Nursing, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India

<sup>3</sup>Guidance of Principal, M.S.B. College of Nursing, Guntur

Chairperson, Board of Studies (Sociology & Social Work), Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur.

## Abstract

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) constitute a major public health challenge globally and account for a significant proportion of morbidity and mortality in India. Rapid urbanization, lifestyle transitions, physical inactivity, unhealthy dietary practices and tobacco use have contributed to the rising burden of NCDs in rural populations. This study aimed to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding non-communicable diseases among adults residing in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 200 adults selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using a structured knowledge, attitude and practice questionnaire. The findings revealed that a majority of the participants had inadequate knowledge related to risk factors and prevention of NCDs, while attitudes towards prevention were moderately favorable. However, the adoption of healthy lifestyle practices was low. The study emphasizes the need for sustained nurse-led health education and community-based preventive interventions to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases.

**Keywords:** Non-communicable diseases, Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Community health nursing

## 1. Introduction

Non-communicable diseases such as diabetes mellitus, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory diseases and cancers are emerging as the leading causes of death worldwide. According to the World Health Organization, NCDs account for more than 70% of global deaths. In India, the burden of NCDs has increased significantly over the past two decades, affecting both urban and rural populations. Rural communities are increasingly vulnerable due to limited awareness, inadequate access to preventive health services, poverty and sociocultural practices. Nurses, especially community health nurses, play a pivotal role in prevention, early detection and management of NCDs through health education, screening and lifestyle modification counselling.

Knowledge, attitude and practice studies provide valuable insights into community perceptions and behaviors related to health and illness. Understanding these aspects helps in designing targeted interventions to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice. Despite the growing burden of NCDs, there is limited published evidence focusing on rural Andhra Pradesh. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding non-communicable diseases among rural adults.

## 2. Objectives

1. To assess the level of knowledge regarding non-communicable diseases among rural adults.
2. To assess the attitude towards prevention of non-communicable diseases.
3. To assess the practices related to lifestyle modification and prevention of non-communicable diseases.
4. To find the association between selected socio-demographic variables and knowledge levels.

## 3. Materials and Methods

A descriptive cross-sectional research design was adopted for the present study. The study was conducted in selected rural villages of Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh. The population comprised adults aged 20–60 years residing in the selected rural areas. A total of 200 adults were selected using convenience sampling technique. Inclusion criteria included adults willing to participate and residing in the area for more than one year. Individuals with severe illness were excluded from the study.

The tool used for data collection consisted of four sections: Section A included socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, education, occupation and income. Section B consisted of a structured knowledge questionnaire on causes, risk factors, symptoms and prevention of NCDs. Section C included an attitude scale, and Section D assessed self-reported lifestyle practices. The tool was validated by experts in nursing and public health, and reliability was established using the split-half method.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Ethics Committee. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study. Data were collected through interview method to ensure clarity and accuracy.

## 4. Results

The analysis of socio-demographic variables revealed that the majority of participants were in the age group of 31–50 years. More than half of the participants had secondary level education. With regard to knowledge, 60% of participants had inadequate knowledge, 28% had moderately adequate knowledge and only 12% demonstrated adequate knowledge regarding NCDs. Attitude assessment showed that 52% of participants had a positive attitude towards prevention of NCDs. However, only 38% of participants reported practicing regular physical activity, balanced diet and avoidance of tobacco and alcohol.

A significant association was found between educational status and level of knowledge ( $p < 0.05$ ). Participants with higher education demonstrated better knowledge and healthier practices compared to

those with lower education levels.

## 5. Discussion

The findings of the present study indicate a high prevalence of inadequate knowledge regarding non-communicable diseases among rural adults. Although attitudes towards prevention were favorable, there was a noticeable gap between knowledge and actual practice. Similar findings have been reported in studies conducted in other parts of India, highlighting the need for effective community-based interventions. Nurses are strategically positioned to address this gap through continuous health education, motivation and follow-up.

Community health nurses can play a vital role in promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors by conducting regular health camps, screening programs and awareness sessions. Integration of NCD prevention into routine primary healthcare services is essential to reduce long-term complications and healthcare costs.

## 6. Conclusion

The study concludes that while rural adults demonstrate a positive attitude towards prevention of non-communicable diseases, inadequate knowledge and poor lifestyle practices persist. Strengthening nurse-led community health education and preventive strategies is essential to control the growing burden of NCDs in rural areas.

## 7. Implications for Nursing Practice

The findings of the study emphasize the need for active involvement of nurses in community-based NCD prevention programs. Nursing curricula should strengthen training in health promotion and preventive care to prepare nurses for effective community outreach.

## References

1. World Health Organization. Noncommunicable diseases. WHO; 2022.
2. Park K. Preventive and Social Medicine. 26th ed. Jabalpur: Banarsidas Bhanot; 2020.
3. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS); 2021.
4. Gupta R, Gaur K, Ram CVS. Emerging trends in hypertension epidemiology in India. Indian Journal of Medical Research. 2019;149(5):533–544.