

Treatment seeking behaviour of animal bite among a rural population in Trichy district: A cross sectional community-based study

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Animal Bite is a major health problem. The people most affected by these bites live in poor rural communities, who are mostly ignorant in this regard. So this study was carried out to know the prevalence of animal bite, epidemiological risk factors and treatment seeking behaviour in the rural population of a south Indian district.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study was conducted among 342 subjects (N=342) in Punjai Sangenthi village in Pullambadi Block in Trichy district, Tamilnadu during May 2016. A structured Questionnaire was used to collect data. Period prevalence of any animal bite in past 3 months and treatment seeking behaviour were the primary outcome variables. It was analysed with SPSS 20.0 trial version. Bivariate analysis was done. p value <0.05 was considered statistically significant. **Results:** Majority of the study population were in the age group of 20-39 years (41.8%), followed by 40-59 years (26.6%). The prevalence of animal bite in the past 3 months was 14.3% (95% C.I. of 10.79% to 18.5%). Dog bite (87.8%, 43/49) was the most common animal bite. 63.3% (31/49, 95% C.I. of 49.8% to 76.8%) of those with animal bite went to hospital for treatment. Sleeping outside the house (12.6%, 43/342, p=0.0003) and having a pet animal (9.4%, 32/342, p=0.004) were factors significantly associated with animal bite.

Conclusion: 36.7% of population did not seek treatment for animal bite. Considering the prevalence of different animal bites and treatment seeking behaviour among them, there is a need for administering behavioural change education through anti-rabies clinics and attached primary health care centres to eventually improve their attitude and practice towards animal bite.

Key word: Animal bite, Dog bite, Treatment seeking behavior, Prevalence, Rural population, Rabies, Pet animal.

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