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Association between parent-child interaction in chronic disease management and knowledge on parental chronic diseases among children in Tellippalai Education Zone

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Background and objective: Chronic diseases like diabetes mellitus (DM) and dyslipidaemia (DL) are rising globally, requiring effective lifestyle changes and family involvement for optimal control. Adolescents can influence their parents' health behaviours through positive communication and support. The aim of the study was to assess the association between parent-child interaction in chronic disease management and knowledge on parental chronic diseases among children in Tellippalai education zone.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 426 Grade 11 students in the Tellippalai Education Division using cluster sampling. Students whose parents had either DM or DL were included. Data were collected through a self-administered structured questionnaire assessing knowledge on DM and DL, categorized as good or poor based on a pre-set scoring system. Quality of parent-child interaction was evaluated through the frequency of health-related discussions and shared decision-making and student involvement in parental disease management. Data were analysed using SPSS with descriptive statistics and chi-square tests to assess associations.

Results: Among 426 participants, 71.1% had poor knowledge of DM and 85.4% had poor knowledge of DL. Students with good knowledge (DM 28.9%, DL 14.6%) were more likely to engage in frequent health-related discussions with parents and participate in their disease management ($p < 0.05$). A positive association was found between better knowledge and stronger parent-child interaction.

Conclusion: Students with better understanding of DM and DL showed stronger engagement with their parents in disease management. Strengthening school-based health education via health clubs, curriculum integration, health campaigns, etc, could enhance both adolescent knowledge and family involvement in chronic disease care.

Keywords: diabetes mellitus, dyslipidaemia, knowledge, parent-child interaction, disease management