Adherence to glaucoma treatment and associated factors among patients with glaucoma attending the Eye Clinics at Teaching Hospital Jaffna

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Background and objective: Glaucoma is characterized by optic neuropathy resulting in progressive visual field loss. The number of patients receiving treatment for glaucoma has been increasing annually at Teaching Hospital Jaffna. This study aims to assess adherence to glaucoma treatment among patients with glaucoma attending the Eye Clinics at Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

Methods: This was a descriptive cross-sectional hospital-based study among 427 glaucoma patients selected by systematic sampling from the Eye Clinics of Teaching Hospital Jaffna. Data were collected from October to November 2019 by an interviewer-administered questionnaire and data extraction form and analyzed with SPSS version 21. The Morisky Medication Adherence Scale (MMAS) was used to assess treatment adherence. Chi-square test was used to measure associations and $p \leq 0.05$ was considered significant.

Results: All participants were Sri Lankan Tamil, and among them 414 (93%) were Hindus and the remainder were Christians (7%). According to the MMAS, 60.7% (n=270) of the sample adhered to glaucoma treatment. Being Hindu and having a higher monthly income (more than LKR 10,000) were significantly associated with treatment adherence. There was no evidence of an association with age, sex, educational level, occupation, or monthly medical expenses.

Conclusion: Over a third of glaucoma patients attending the Eye Clinics of Teaching Hospital Jaffna do not adhere to their treatment. Patients who are Hindus and have a higher monthly income, adhere more to their treatment than patients who are Christian and have a lower monthly income.

Keywords: Glaucoma, Treatment Adherence, Jaffna