

ABSTRACT

Water-borne diseases are among the prevalent infectious diseases throughout the world. The present investigation was carried out to assess the prevalence rate of water-borne diseases among people residing near the left bank of river Ravi.

This study has a descriptive cross sectional design on a statistically calculated sample of 50 households selected through simple random sampling technique. The target site was divided into three areas, I, II and III respectively. People were interviewed and water samples were collected from households. Water samples were tested for microbial estimation. In addition to this, data from health care facilities, providing treatment to these people for health problems, particularly water related diseases also collected. The data was recorded on a structured questionnaire properly designed and pre-tested.

The information obtained from the study revealed a rather grave scenario, showing that almost 69% of the people were illiterate. An average of 42% did not have the facility of community water supply and 21% had to fetch water from a nearby place. An idea of the sanitation conditions could be made from the fact that almost 76% had closed sewer type of toilet facility whereas 8% used the conservancy and 16% had to go to open fields for defecation, as they did not have any toilet facility in their own houses.

The most common illness was diarrhoea and vomiting having a prevalence rate of 62.67% followed by skin problems (21% prevalence rate). Water-borne diseases were mostly prevalent in monsoon and summer season (May — September) showing a percentage of 44.67% and 39.33% respectively.

82% of the people interviewed admitted that they did not treat (boiled or filtered) water before drinking. Although the answers may be a little biased, but all the people claimed that they washed hands before eating meals. Surprisingly, 6% people of area 111 admitted that they did not wash hands after visiting toilet.

The health facilities available to the target area included one public health facility, 7 private clinics and 2 health facilities run by welfare organizations. Most of the health care providers were just matriculate. A total of 42 cases of diarrhoea per day, 846 in one week and 2648 in one month were treated in all health care facilities.

Bacteriological examination of water samples, collected from 50 households in the area of study alarmingly showed that only 4 (8%) samples out of 50 were found to be fit for drinking while 46 (92%) were found to be contaminated and were found unfit for drinking according to WHO standards.